GUIDE TO MEDIUMSHIP

E. W. & M. H. WALLIS

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A GUIDE TO MEDIUMSHIP,

AND PSYCHICAL UNFOLDMENT.

BY

E. W. AND M. H. WALLIS.

IN THREE PARTS.

PART I.—MEDIUMSHIP EXPLAINED.
II.—HOW TO DEVELOP MEDIUMSHIP.
III.—PSYCHICAL SELF-CULTURE.

'I could as soon doubt the existence of the sun as doubt the fact of my holding communion with my darling daughter. I thank God daily for the privilege.'—REV. THOS. GREENBURY.

[*Entered at Stationers' Hall.*]

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Do we indeed desire the dead
Should still be near us at our side?
Is there no baseness we would hide?
No inner vileness that we dread?

Shall he for whose applause I strove,—
I had such reverence for his blame,—
See with clear eye some hidden shame,
And I be lessened in his love?

I wrong the dead with fears untrue;
Shall love be blamed for want of faith?
There must be wisdom with great Death:
The dead shall look me through and through.

Be near us when we climb or fall;
Ye watch, like God, the rolling hours
With larger, other eyes than ours,
To make allowance for us all.

TENNYSON.

PREFACE.

HAVING been frequently asked, during the last twenty-five years, for information and advice concerning Mediumship and its Development, we have constantly felt the want of a suitable handbook which we could recommend to inquirers and to those who were developing their own mediumistic powers, or assisting in the development of others. As this need has grown more and more pressing with the increasing number of investigators into Spiritualism we have endeavoured to produce a clear, practical, and serviceable 'Guide,' embodying the most comprehensive explanations and the best counsel that we are able to give, derived from our own experiences and inspirations, and from those of other writers, both English and American.

We have found it advisable to divide this 'Guide' into three distinct parts, and, although this arrangement has compelled us to present matters from different points of view, we feel assured that our readers will recognise the advantages that have been gained by the separate consideration of the many problems involved.

We cordially suggest to those readers who desire further information that they should become Members (or Associates) of the London Spiritualist Alliance, and thus gain access to the best library in the world devoted to Spiritualism and psychical subjects generally. The weekly journals of the Spiritualistic movement—'Light' and the 'Two Worlds'—are always open for the consideration of questions from inquirers, and should be subscribed for by those who seriously intend to study the subject, and desire to find an answer to the ever-pressing questions, 'Where are the dead?' and 'What fate awaits us when we die?'

Commending this work to the kindly consideration of Spiritualists, and to the thoughtful study of inquirers, we send it forth to the world, with, we trust, the blessings of the angels, in the hope that it may prove helpful to many of our brothers and sisters who are seeking for 'Light, more Light!'

E. W. AND M. H. WALLIS.

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PART I.

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PART I.

MEDIUMSHIP EXPLAINED.

CHAPTER I.

THE SACRED OFFICE OF MEDIUMSHIP.

I do not know of any other subject on the face of the earth that can for one moment compare with it [psychical investigation] in importance. On the turning of this investigation depends the opinion which the intelligent world is to hold in the future as to the nature and destiny of man.—
—Rev. Minot J. Savage.

What if what we call death is only the passing out of a spirit-self to a more refined or in some way entirely different etheric movement?—in which case a spirit might be perfectly well able to pass through what we call solid Matter, and live its own free and glorious life, on its appropriate plane, rid of 'this muddy vesture of decay.' An inspiring thought! An enchanting hope!—J. Page Hopps.

Through the gateway of mediumship for upwards of fifty years the world has been catching glimpses of the glory of the land immortal, and visitants from that 'bourne' whence it was erroneously said that 'no traveller returns' have made their presence known beyond all doubt or denial, thus proving the continued conscious existence of human beings and the sequential character of the life hereafter.

Though the messages from the unseen have at times been imperfect and fragmentary, still they have been messages. If but telegraphic despatches, so to speak, instead of voluminous letters; or like telephonic snatches of conversation rather

than face-to-face outpourings of thought and feeling, still they have been greetings and comforting assurances of undying affection from the people living in the land 'beyond the veil.'

Although many a sorrowing soul has longed for further revelation, and regretted the inability of the spirits to comply with the requests for fuller information, still, the gates have been ajar, and sometimes it has truly seemed as though they had been flung wide open—so clear and consoling were the messages from the loved ones on the other side of death's valley of shadow.

The manifestations of the presence of spirits and the evidences of their identity, which have been accumulating during all these years, have solved the 'great secret,' and we know that death is not a *cul-de-sac*, but a thoroughfare. The dread of death disappeared altogether with the mists of ignorance, as, through the gateway of mediumship, the shining presence of ministering spirits, 'our very own dear departed,' illumined the pathway which we must all tread to our great promotion.

THE STONE ROLLED AWAY.

'Immortality demonstrated through mediumship' should be inscribed upon the banner of Spiritualism, for the fact of life beyond the incident of death has been proved beyond all peradventure to millions of intelligent and enlightened people since the new spiritual era was inaugurated. To mediums—the modern mediators—therefore, belong the office and the honour of rolling back the stone from the tomb and establishing faith upon the firm basis of the knowledge (scientifically ascertained and proven) of the continued intelligent existence in the spiritual realm of those who went forth through the death change into light and liberty 'over there.'

Mediums, as intermediaries, have enabled spirit people to comfort the sad and encourage the weak; to relieve the doubter and console the bereaved; to confirm the old-world

traditions regarding bygone spirit intervention and revelation, and supplement our hopes and intuitions with proof palpable.

Present-day experiences of inspiration and spirit manifestation make credible and acceptable many things in ancient records which must otherwise have been discarded as superstitious and false. Spiritualism redeems the so-called 'supernatural' and miraculous occurrences of the Bible, by explaining them and proving their naturalness. The capability claimed for old-time seers and prophets to see angels and hear voices is now known to be a natural faculty, which, in certain people, is perfectly normal, while it can be induced in others by the influence of operators in or out of the body. It can also be cultivated to some degree by most people who care to study the subject and provide the necessary conditions for its development and exercise.

The famine, 'not of bread, nor of water, but of hearing words from the Lord,' and the loss of the 'open vision' of the spirit, which afflicted Christendom for so many years (because of the blind intolerance of zealots who, in their adherence to the 'letter,' crushed out the sensitives through whom the 'spirit' might have been revealed), that famine is rapidly passing away, and we are being fed with the living bread of spiritual inspiration, and are growing strong enough to welcome the messengers who come to us through the gateway of mediumship from their after-death home.

THE JOY OF KNOWLEDGE.

The intense joy which results from the complete realisation of the actual presence and identity of the so-called dead; of their independent activity; of their unchanged nature and affection—that they are truly alive, thinking, remembering, loving, and happy—that they are just themselves—must be experienced to be understood. Let idealists, intuitionalists, and transcendentalists talk as they may about the superiority of those whose inner consciousness or philosophical attainments enable them to believe without such evidences, yet even

they themselves are thrilled and delighted when they receive actual and satisfactory demonstrations of the personal survival of their own loved ones; and we know of no means whereby such evidences can be obtained save through mediumship.

When once the conviction has been driven home, and the truth of spirit ministry has been realised, nothing can destroy it.

The Spiritualist stands upon firm ground—the impregnable rock of ascertained fact. He knows that intercourse between the two worlds is real, continuous; therefore he is proof against all speculations, denunciations, and adverse theories. Dogmatic condemnations, 'bogey' cries, charges of fraud against mediums fail to move or frighten him. He can 'speak what he knows and testify to what he has seen'; his positive and affirmative experience and testimony outweigh all the opposition of 'doubting Thomases' who do not know.

PATIENCE AND PERSEVERANCE REWARDED.

Through the gateway of mediumship the spirits make themselves known in a variety of ways. There are many phases of mediumistic phenomena, and the student will find that he must be patient, painstaking, and persevering if he would make sure of his facts. Careful investigation, possibly prolonged research, under many difficulties and with many discouragements, will be required; but 'success is certain if energy fail not,' and the results will adequately recompense him for all sacrifice and struggle! For in the light of the demonstrated fact of continued conscious existence after death, it is clear that man is even now 'a spirit served by organs'—that consequently the basis of all religious experience and affirmation is the spiritual consciousness of mankind. There could be no revelation to man of spiritual truth or moral duty if he were not a spirit possessing the capabilities of receiving and comprehending, of interpreting and applying, the revelations and inspirations which appeal to and quicken the inner (and higher) self.

Spiritualism is the science, philosophy, and religion of Life. As the Rev. H. R. Haweis has truly said : 'It leads us to the centre and source of life; it reveals to us the bright galaxy of ministering spirits, the Jacob's ladder which reaches from earth to Heaven, and upon which the angels of God are ascending and descending. Spiritualism has told us of the remedial world beyond. It points us to life, not death, for

> '"'Tis life not death for which we pant;
> 'Tis life of which our nerves are scant,
> More life and fuller that we want."'

The corner-stone of the Temple of the Spirit, rejected by the literalists, must be again placed in position, and 'spiritual gifts' must be coveted and cultivated. Then the gates may be more fully opened and the angels freely come through to proclaim the glad tidings of life continuous, progressive, and joyous here and hereafter; and so the worship of God may find expression in the loving services rendered by man to man in both worlds.

CHAPTER II.

WHAT IS MEDIUMSHIP?

There is an unseen cord which binds
  The whole wide world together;
Through every human life it winds—
  This one mysterious tether.

There are no separate lives; the chain,
  Too subtle for our seeing,
Unites us all upon the plane
  Of universal being.
—ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

Positive observation proves the existence of a psychic world as real to us as the world known to us by our physical senses.—CAMILLE FLAMMARION.

THE fundamental laws of life are those of attraction and repulsion, and where psychic spheres can be attuned, and vibrate in harmony, community of sensation can be established and thought can be transmitted from mind to mind, whether the transference occurs between two persons upon this plane of existence or between a sensitive medium and an excarnate spirit.

No one is or can be wholly independent. We inevitably attract congenial unseen influences, and become related to people in or out of the body, acting upon them psychically and in turn responding to their thoughts and influence. Action and re-action are constantly going on in this way; we may co-operate—dominate or be dominated—quite unconsciously, but the interaction is taking place all the same. It is necessary, therefore, that we should be aware of the fact,

that we may take steps to guard ourselves against the intrusion into our thought-life of injurious influences, and at the same time determine to become factors for good by the intelligent exercise of our influence over others. There must be a reason why in our relationships with each other we establish certain instantaneous sympathetic conditions, and are attracted to and harmonise with certain individuals, while others are repugnant and distasteful to us. These conditions do not always last, nor is it well that they should. At times we may be closely drawn to certain persons and be repelled by them at other stages in our career.

VIBRATIONS.

All our sensations are due to the impact upon our sense-organs of vibrations in some form. Variations in the strength and rapidity of these vibrations constitute the difference in our perceptions. Our range of response is but a limited one. Some vibrations are too rapid and some too slow to affect our senses, and therefore we have called to our aid various mechanical contrivances which enable us to recognise existences which would otherwise remain unknown. But it is still conceivable that there may be, and doubtless are, conditions of the vibratory energy that escape us, and which, if we could develop finer senses, would yield wonderful results and extensions of our power and knowledge. In psychic science, or by spiritual unfoldment, we are coming into relation with forces, possibilities, and personalities which amount to a revelation of the spiritual universe. As J. Page Hopps very beautifully puts it: 'It is indeed true that "things are not what they seem"; but everything is what it seems to be only because of its plane of being, and that is determined by its vibrations. On one plane there is a certain vibratory value or speed: on another plane, a different one: but a plane is not a place but a state: so that two utterly different planes of being might co-exist in the same place and be entirely unknown to one another. That

seems absurd, but it is a scientific truth, and many authorities have endorsed it, notably Jevons, who, in his "Principles of Science," says: "There may be, right here and now, passing through us and this world, some planet invisible to us, with mountains, oceans, lakes, rivers, cities, and inhabitants:" and we not know anything of it all. What a suggestion there is in that as to the difference between a spirit embodied and a spirit disembodied!'

AURIC EMANATIONS REAL.

It is now an established fact that not only are flowers surrounded by invisible perfume, and other objects by an atmosphere charged with unseen exhalations which may be beneficial or inimical to the health of human beings, but that men and women are constantly emitting, and surrounded by, an auric sphere which is not only charged with their physical magnetic conditions, but registers the quality of their thought-life and moral states. 'In this aura, as in a mirror, the sensitive sees reflected the history of the object, its significance in connection with the emotions and such other associations with the personalities of its possessors—of the life and experience of which it formed a part—as he may bring himself *en rapport* with. All this is not only perceived objectively, but is also "sensed" subjectively. The sensitive seems to merge his own personality in the aura of the object, and in his own person feels the pains and pleasures he describes.'*

THE INTERVENING ETHER.

It is manifest that if an operator, by the concentration of his mental energies, can project his thought upon another individual who is thereafter able to reproduce the picture or the words thus thought of, there must be some medium of communication between the two. Hudson Tuttle well says: 'Whatever the influence may be, it must pass across greater, or less distances to produce the effects observed. It cannot

* 'The Sixth Sense.' By PAUL TYNER.

be transmitted across a void. It must have its own means of conduction.' If a sensitive can, as Mr. Tyner affirms, and our own experience proves, bring himself, or be brought, *en rapport* with people, places, or things to the extent of merging himself for the time being into, and becoming identified with, them, there must be some subtle force or agency which makes such experiences possible. To quote Hudson Tuttle again: 'Admitting the facts of impressibility, the existence of a spirit-ether, universal, and all-permeating, if not demonstrated, is a theory towards which all related facts gather in cumulative evidence. Here we arrive at the philosophy of all psychological influence, whether received under the name of magnetism, hypnotism, mental influence, or spiritual impression. One law underlies and ramifies through all these diversified effects.'

TELEPATHY AND SIR W. CROOKES.

Sir Wm. Crookes, in his Presidential Address to the British Association for the Advancement of Science, said: 'If telepathy take place we have two physical facts—the physical change in the brain of A, the suggester, and the analogous change in the brain of B, the recipient of the suggestion. Between these two physical events there must exist a train of physical causes.' Sir William argued that the connecting series of intermediate causes can only occur through an intervening medium, and he claimed that 'with every fresh advance of knowledge it is shown that ether vibrations have powers and attributes abundantly equal to any demand—even to the transmission of thought.'

Granting that such telepathic transference is scientifically demonstrated, it is assuredly a spiritual manifestation—one embodied spirit communicating with another; and if embodied spirits have this power, why not the so-called disembodied also?

'NATURAL LAWS' ARE NOT INTELLIGENT ENTITIES.

Paul Tyner points out the important fact that 'Neither a universal ether, constant and pervading all space, nor a rare effluence, existing as an attribute of living, sentient beings, will alone account for thought-transference, clairvoyance, psychometry, or hypnotism—to use many names for the one process of psychic perception. As has been shown, this perception depends, more than aught else, on that degree of *rapport* which we can only designate by the entirely inadequate term, "community of sensation." It is plain that these phenomena depend absolutely on both the universal ether, as a medium, and the emanation from sentient, living beings as a force, working upon that medium—as the painter works in colours or the sculptor in stone.' But, as neither 'natural laws' nor 'natural forces' can exercise volition or display purpose, and this 'community of sensation' can only be experienced by living, conscious and intelligent beings, thought-transference by means of the vibratory medium or ether is only possible between two such individuals.

A VAST WHISPERING GALLERY.

Dr. J. M. Peebles, the venerable 'spiritual pilgrim,' says: 'The universe is not dead. Every atom is afire with life. Inspiration is as eternal as the stars. Trances are in perfect harmony with psychic law. God is everywhere from sand to stars, to the suns that dot the immensities; and angels would speak as readily to God's living Americans as to His ancient Hebrews if the proper conditions were given them. Open the doors of your souls, O mortals, and invite the good angels in; invite your loved ones, peopling the higher spheres, to come with their olive-leaf messages of love and truth and wisdom. The universe is one. Conscious spirit is infinite, and if, as science teaches, every undulating wave in its rhythmic motion impinges upon every other wave in the vast, all-embracing sea of universal life, who can set limits to the bounds of thought,

or will, or spirit influence, either within or without the mortal body? Believed or not, this peerless universe is one grand whispering gallery, and we are surrounded, as the apostle taught, by a great "cloud of witnesses"—numberless multitudes—who delight under proper conditions to converse with earth's foot-weary travellers, by impression, inspiration, premonition, and vision. Precious fact, proving the perpetuity of intelligence, of love, and of law, beyond death's portal!'

SPIRIT, SOUL, AND BODY.

The spirit is connected with the body by means of the soul, or psychical body, which in turn affects the brain, the nerves and muscles of the outer body, through the agency of which it expresses itself, and the quality and extent of such expression will depend upon the degree of responsiveness and psychic development in the individual concerned.

'For of the soule the bodie forme doth take;
For soule is forme, and doth the bodie make.'

Some people may, and probably will, be conscious that they are sepulchred in the flesh, the spirit being so deeply immured within the body that it is well-nigh helpless and but dimly aware of its possibilities and destiny. Others will realise more or less fully that they can use the body, master and control it, instead of being its slave.

Most people possess the faculty of sight, but all do not see alike. Some are colour blind; some have clearer sight than others. We are apt to imagine that because trees, houses, and other objects present a certain appearance to us they will appear exactly the same to those around us. On general lines they do, but undoubtedly different people are differently affected and perceive differently. Some people have innate artistic powers, and although everyone with patience and endeavour may develop something of the artistic nature, all cannot be past masters in artistic expression. Some have a natural gift for mechanics, some for music, some for oratory, others for song; in others these

gifts can be induced to a limited extent, and again in others while the reasoning faculties may be active the artistic nature may be dormant. Man's spiritual possibilities are no exception. Some people exercise their psychic powers naturally and freely, in others the activity of the spiritual perceptions can be cultivated or induced, while the remaining class have little or no knowledge of the existence of their powers, or of how to develop them.

MESMERISM A STEPPING-STONE TO SPIRITUALISM.

Mesmerism demonstrates that certain persons are naturally sensitive and susceptible to positive mental forces. Under the new name of hypnotism most of the claims that were made by the early mesmeric practitioners which were then derided as unscientific are now put forward and readily accepted as true. Some difference of opinion exists as to whether all the phenomena are due to 'suggestion' or whether there is any 'fluid' or 'force' or 'human magnetism' employed and passing from the operator to his subject. Magnetism may not be the proper name to use, but the consensus of opinion seems to be growing more and more favourable to the theory that a vital, psychic force does exist and is utilised for the production of some, at least, of the phenomena which are associated with the practice of mesmerism.

When a sensitive is thrown into the sleep state by a mesmerist the 'community of sensation' already referred to is frequently observed between them. The subject tastes, thinks, feels, and sees as does the operator, or as he determines. In certain states the subject is deaf to every other voice but that of the mesmerist. In other stages, in the deep magnetic trance, the subject becomes clairvoyant, travels in spirit, and reports what is transpiring at the time many miles away, or will see and describe the conditions of the internal organs of a person to whom he is sympathetically related by the operator—and such a diagnosis is generally most accurate. In some cases

doctors have been wrong and the mesmerised clairvoyant right. A remarkable fact is well worthy of notice here. Some mesmerised subjects have spontaneously seen and described persons long since dead, and entirely unknown to them in their normal condition. They have insisted on the fact that such persons were alive, not dead.

SPIRITS INTERVENE.

Some skilful mesmerists have found that they have lost the control of their subjects—that a stronger will than theirs has been brought to bear upon the sensitive. Upon investigation they have been compelled to recognise the presence and operation of a spirit mesmerist, and in some instances clear and unmistakable evidences of the identity of the spirit have been given, and in this way not a few mesmerists have been driven to admit spirit return—as it is often called—and thus mesmerism has been in fact a veritable stepping-stone to Spiritualism, as it is in the philosophic explanation of the means by which intercourse between the two planes of existence is possible.

To discredit Spiritualism, it is now the fashion with some people to admit mesmerism, clairvoyance, and thought reading.

'Trance mediumship is only mesmerism, and does not need any spirits to account for it,' is the assertion made by those who oppose us.

It is only necessary to ask in reply, 'Who mesmerises the medium?' In mesmerism an operator and a subject are necessary. Why may not a deceased mesmerist affect his subject by his magnetic power as he used to do before he passed on, and transfer his thoughts to his medium? As no visible mesmerist affects the medium, the inference is that he is mesmerised by an unseen operator; and when, as it frequently does, as is abundantly proved by the testimonies of earnest investigators, the intelligence displayed surpasses the normal abilities of the medium, and gives corroborative proofs

of identity with some person once living on earth, a clear case is made out that 'the intelligent operator at the other end of the line' is who and what he claims to be, viz., a discarnate human being.

Thought-reading does not 'cover the whole ground,' for experience proves that when the visitor goes to a medium, anxious to obtain special information or 'tests,' he is frequently disappointed. Other spirits, of whom he was not thinking, are spoken of and described to him, and facts, entirely unknown to him, are stated, which he can only verify by subsequent inquiries. It is not true, therefore, as is so often asserted, that mediums only 'pick the brains of sitters,' read their thoughts, or describe the people of whom they are thinking.

SPIRITUALISM A STEP UPWARDS.

Spiritualism deals with a higher range and a wider field of supersensuous phenomena than either mesmerism, telepathy, psychometry, clairvoyance, or healing, because the natural susceptibility of man in these directions is increased and intensified, and exercised upon a superior plane, when it is utilised by intelligent spirit operators.

Mesmerism proved that one spirit in the body can influence another spirit also in the body, and can also affect the body of that individual. But Spiritualism has proved that a spirit out of the body can influence a spirit in the body, and render him impervious to ordinary physical sensations, while he is at the same time acutely sensitive to spiritual or psychical impressions. Teeth have been drawn, and surgical operations have been performed upon mediums when under 'control' without the slightest indication upon their part of experiencing painful sensations, and yet, on other occasions, by thought-transference from the spirits, they have been made to cry and exhibit every indication of extreme grief, anger, pain, or delight. It is not true that sensitiveness is confined to those who are diseased, weak of will, neurotic, or hysterical. Those who are

susceptible to psychic influence may be impulsive, warm-hearted, spontaneous, sociable, and even passionate; but not by any means, or of necessity, weak-minded or vicious.

MEDIUMSHIP DEFINED.

Dr. Dean Clarke, writing in the 'Banner of Light,' says: 'The word mediumship, as understood and used by Spiritualists, technically speaking, means a susceptibility to the influence, and more or less control, of decarnated spirits. Physiologically, it means a peculiar nervous susceptibility to what may be termed the "psychic force," which spirits use to move the mind or body, or both, of their mortal instrument. Psychologically, it signifies a passive or negative state of mind and body which renders a person subject to the positive will-power of spirits who influence him or her.' The spirit control who employed the hand of 'M.A. (Oxon)' to write his thoughts said: 'The mediumistic peculiarity is one of spirit solely, and not of body, seeing that it occurs in all varieties of physical frames, in the male and in the female; in the magnetic and in the electric; in the stout and robust as well as in the puny and thin of body; in the old and in the young; in all conditions, and under all circumstances. This alone would lead you to see that it is not a physical matter; and that conclusion is strengthened for you by the fact that the gift is perpetuated even after the death of the earth body. Those who on your earth have been mediums retain the gift and use it with us. They are the most frequent visitors to your world; they communicate most readily; and it is through them that spirits who have not the gift are enabled to communicate with your earth.'

Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten claimed that: 'Whatever that force may be which constitutes the difference between a "medium" and a non-medium, it is certainly of a mental and magnetic character—that is, a combination of the subtle elements of mind and magnetism, and therefore of a psychological and not of a purely physical character. Whilst the

Spiritualists of this generation have had no one to teach them either what spiritual gifts are, or how to use or how to abuse them, experience has shown that the conditions under which spiritual phenomena are produced through mediums are not only helped or hindered by their mental states, but also by the will, magnetism, and mental states of those who surround them.'

MEDIUMSHIP ON DIFFERENT PLANES.

The same laws govern the relations between the sensitive and the spirit operator as between the hypnotist and his subject. Therefore mediumship is not necessarily spiritual, it may be of all kinds; there may be psychical relationship of a high grade and of a low one. There may be messages from beyond that prove the identity of spirits and give evidence of the continuity of life, of the survival of mind, and yet they may not minister to spiritual growth, nor awaken any exalted desire to be of service to God and man. There may be psychical sympathy and not spiritual fellowship; there may be spirit intercourse and not spiritual communion, which should be the goal of all who seek for evidences of life beyond the valley of death.

It is no longer possible to regard mediumship as a supernatural endowment. It is, as regards the psychic susceptibility upon which it depends, the common property of the race, and is therefore as natural as are the 'gifts' of song or oratory or the ability to paint or construct. But as certain gifts and graces are more developed in some individuals than in others, in like manner the sensitiveness which is called mediumship is more highly developed (or is capable of such development) in certain peculiarly constituted persons who may be regarded as supernormally gifted, yet as naturally so as geniuses in other directions.

STUDY NECESSARY FOR SELF-KNOWLEDGE.

The study of man's natural spiritual aptitudes, and their intelligent development, safeguarding and exercise, are there-

fore of supreme importance to the individual and the race. Those who are constitutionally sensitive cannot properly understand themselves, or rightly interpret their own feelings and experiences, until they realise and comprehend these soul-possibilities and relationships, and the world will be benefited by the spread of the knowledge that by the cultivation of these powers of spiritual perception and expression the presence of the so-called dead can be scientifically demonstrated and the continuity and purpose of life be revealed.

When wisely cultivated and rightly used, mediumship seldom has any ill effects; on the contrary, it tends to the harmonising of the individual, both physically and morally. With pure aspirations and a reasonable amount of common-sense, a medium, even of only moderate power, may maintain his health, refine and expand his intellect, and become a substantial helper to his fellows. But mediumship, to be healthy, must be progressive; there is no standing still and maintaining the integrity of either spiritual or physical powers. No sooner does aspiration stop than retrogression begins; but with a high standard always before him, and favourable environments, there appears to be no limit to the individual development of the earnest and intelligent medium. The power on the spirit side is practically unlimited; all that is required is an instrument sufficiently perfect to express it.

PHILOSOPHICAL DEDUCTIONS.

The belief in a future life is well-nigh universal, but if man lives after the decease of the body he must surely persist as a rational, conscious intelligence. Such persistence must be natural, and provision for the sequential spiritual life of man must have been made as part of the economy of the universe.

The idea of the indestructibility of life is forcing itself upon intelligent people, and the survival of man beyond the incident of death is coming to be regarded as due to, and dependent upon, his spiritual nature. Whatever powers are

possessed and exercised by the discarnate being are inherent, if dormant, in the essential self while here. Man is immortal because he is an expression of Life—the highest manifestation of that wonderful creative energy which is immanent everywhere. Having attained self-conscious being, the doffing of the physical body does not destroy life, but, in reality, affords it greater scope for expression under new and more subtle conditions.

If man is a spiritual being now and always; if power resides within; if all knowledge is possessed as a state of consciousness—then life after death must mean the retention of knowledge, the increase of power for self-expression, and the satisfaction of the mental and spiritual ideals of the real self.

As all manifestation of mind depends upon the consciousness and its will ability; as all transference of thought is due to the ability of one mind to appeal to another by inducing sensations which result from some form or mode of motion in the ether or psychic atmosphere—there must be some point of contact, some intermediary agency by means of which such results can be achieved; for the eye light and colour, for the ear sound, and so on; but

MIND MUST INTERPRET MIND.

Vibrations are meaningless until they impinge upon and are cognised by the spirit behind the eye, the ear, the body. The engineer uses the machine—the man his physical instrument.

If communications are to pass between the people who dwell in the spiritual realm (and function on that plane through an etheric or spiritual body) and the dwellers on this outer plane of consciousness, there must be some intervening and uniting medium by means of which thoughts may pass, or other modes of manifestation may be employed. 'Spiritualism is the science of Life in all its conditions and modes of manifestation here and hereafter,' and the principal difficulty which had to be faced was the building of the psychic bridge

into the unseen that our trains of thought might run right through.

The oneness, or unity, of Life is the first fact to be recognised.

The cause of manifestation is always Life. Means to the end are ever employed. Material conditions and agencies are all the time vitalised and utilised by in-dwelling Life, or governed and directed by Intelligence.

Forces of various kinds are controlled or manipulated by man, and, although unseen, are demonstrably real.

Mind is involved in all manifestations which indicate purpose.

Phenomena which are the result of the play of forces that are clearly under the government of an intelligent operator can only be attributed to Intelligence.

THE INTELLIGENT OPERATOR.

Spiritualism has made us acquainted with phenomena—occurrences upon the objective plane—in which force is evidently employed intelligently—that intelligence displaying knowledge, power, purpose, other than, and differing from, the possessions or intentions of any of the visible beings during their occurrence. Upon inquiring of the operator who he is, and what is his object in producing the outward and visible signs of his existence, responses have been forthcoming in which the claim is made that he is a discarnate human being. In many instances test messages have been given in which evidence has been presented leading to the verification of that claim, and, as far as the circumstances of such intercourse admit, of the identification of the unseen operator.

It has been found that the presence of certain persons is indispensable, because they supply the peculiar 'etheric,' 'vital,' 'nervo-magnetic,' or 'psychic' force that is requisite as the intermediate agency. Thus the phenomenal demonstrations which appeal to the observer depend upon a dual agency

—the force to be employed and the human generator of that force.

Other and more direct contact is effected where the operator can relate his own psychic sphere to that of the sensitive who is susceptible to his influence. Then the vital, or nerve, currents can be operated upon immediately by the will of the communicator, who, having thus made the connection, uses the organism of the medium to transmit his message. But if the people on the spiritual plane differed essentially from those on this side there could hardly be any such intercourse.

The identity of origin and the unity of nature and being—the oneness of the mental and the psychic capabilities and endowments of both operator and subject—enable those who know how, to link themselves on to us and give such impulsions to the spiritual ether as stir the brain waves in those of us who are attuned to their rate of vibrations, and cause in us consciousness of vision, voice, feeling, or desire, thought, or purpose, which may be regarded as at once evidence of the unseen; proof of immortality; and an inspiration to higher purposes and nobler ideals.

SPIRITUAL SCIENCE AND RELIGION.

Spiritual science prompts us to make the best use of this life, and impels us to the attainment of the power to recognise and realise the beauty and divinity of our own being—of Life here—and to tread the spiral way of spiritual ascension. In evolution we trace the evidences of the outworking of the involved energy—the immanent mind, the Spirit Divine. Thus the science of the Spirit leads to the recognition of the Religion of Life. 'M. A. (Oxon),' one of our best and most intelligent mediums, made this terse and pointed assertion: 'It is impossible to dissociate Spiritualism, of any sort worth the name, from religion and morals.' It occurs in the following definition, which he gives, of what a Spiritualist is: 'A Spiritualist, first of all, is one who has proven for himself, or has accepted as proven on adequate evidence, the fact that

death does not kill the spirit. But this conviction has far-reaching results. It is impossible to dissociate Spiritualism, of any sort worth the name, from religion and morals. For when a man becomes assured that he will live after his probation here he naturally seeks to know where and how; and equally naturally he seeks his information from those who, having passed to that state, are qualified to give it. He finds that there is a broad agreement as to the essential points which most concern him, and he arrives at the conclusion that belief is little and life and conduct much. He learns that his character is his own production, as it is his own property, and that each act of his daily life is a factor in its evolution. When the probation of earth-life is over he goes to the place that he has prepared for himself. His Spiritualism, when he realises that, has already entered into the sphere of religion.' And Gerald Massey very forcibly says: 'Spiritualism will make religion infinitely more real, and translate it from the domain of belief to that of life. It has been to me, in common with many others, such a lifting of the mental horizon and a letting in of the heavens—such a transformation of faiths into facts—that I can only compare life without it to sailing on board ship with hatches battened down, and being kept prisoner, cribbed, cabined, and confined, living by the light of a candle—dark to the glory overhead, and blind to a thousand possibilities of being—and then suddenly on some starry night allowed to go on deck for the first time to see the stupendous mechanism of the starry heavens all aglow with the glory of God, to feel that vast vision glittering in the eyes, bewilderingly beautiful, and drink in new life with every breath of this wondrous liberty, which makes you dilate almost large enough in soul to fill the immensity which you see around you.'

CHAPTER III.

THE EFFECTS OF MEDIUMSHIP.

No medium can command results, we can only give conditions and invite the aid of the spirits. Do not forget that spirit people have minds of their own, and will act or refrain from acting as they think best, *not* when you please to demand.—B. G. E.

The thoughts we cultivate place us *en rapport* with corresponding spheres or planes of thought, and the man or woman who habitually lives on a good moral plane is impervious to the intrusion of mischievous and immoral influences from either the borderland or the mortal plane.—'Harbinger of Light.'

FOR the normal development of psychic powers an entirely different attitude is required on the part of the sensitive from that which is necessary for the development of mediumship.

The normal psychic must consciously concentrate his attention on the effort to feel, to see, to hear, to 'sense' and know upon the plane of his inner consciousness. He must be receptive—keenly alive to impressions—that he may become cognisant of states of being, and be able to respond to, and interpret, the sensations that are produced in himself. But the sensitive who desires spirit guidance has to be negatively receptive. He is not the actor, but is acted upon. While by attention to the requisite conditions and by his motives and aspirations he may prepare himself for control, he has there after to act or speak, more or less consciously, under the direction, and carry into effect the wishes or purposes, of the intelligence who acts upon and through him. But while this is true it must not be supposed that spirit influence is limited

to, and exerted solely upon, those who are known to be mediums; or that spirits do not assist those who use their own psychic faculties. It is probable that all people who are psychically sensitive and open to impressions are indebted to spirit helpers, whether they are conscious of the fact or not.

There is undoubtedly a greater degree of influx from the spirit side than even Spiritualists are aware. Many persons are indebted to spirit people for spontaneous impulses, which, while those persons act upon them and reap the consequences, they can neither explain nor trace to their source. Spirits frequently associate with and serve their earth friends, although the recipients of their benefactions are unaware of the fact. There would be very much more of this kind of guidance from the unseen, if, instead of being frightened or repellant in their mental attitude towards the spirits, the great bulk of people were prepared to accept such assistance from the other side as perfectly natural and to be expected.

The basis of all enduring union is spiritual. Permanency of harmony can alone be found on the plane of the spirit, and that sympathy of soul which alone unites. There can be no true or lasting spiritual sympathy without reciprocity. The cultivation of the aspirational attitude, of the desire for the best possible results, would lead to the opening up of the powers of perception, reception, and expression of spiritual influences and inspirations of a high and helpful order, and lead to more intimate and stimulating relations with the people from beyond the borderland between the two worlds.

A WIDE FIELD FOR RESEARCH.

In dealing with the question of the effects of mediumship we find that there are many important problems that confront us and await solution. A very wide field of research is opened up to us in the science, philosophy, and religion of the spirit.

While the phenomena of mediumship serve the purpose of supplying the foundation evidences of spirit existence and

identity, they also challenge us to the investigation of the spiritual forces, laws, and principles which operate in the constitution of the universe and the nature of man. The phenomena called spiritual present many difficulties and suggest numerous possibilities, and compel students to undertake the work of the discovery, explanation, and application of the truth regarding ourselves, our responsibilities, our place in Nature, our destiny, our relationship to others and to the 'Power not ourselves'—the Supreme Immanent Life—the Spirit Divine—that ever makes for righteousness.

MEDIUMSHIP AND SELF-DEVELOPMENT.

There seems to be a disposition in some quarters to regard mediumship as inimical to self-development; to argue that 'control' by spirits is injurious to the medium—or to the spirit—or to both. It is not infrequently asserted, or inferentially assumed, that to be a medium involves loss of individuality and consequent injury to the selfhood of the medium. There are some even who hold that a medium should think little and know less, that the evidence of the superior ability of the spirit may be the more apparent. There may be some mediums who are 'ignoramuses,' but it is doubtful if there will be any great degree of intelligence or high spiritual illumination presented through their agency. It is possible that some mediums act foolishly when in their normal state, for the purpose of accentuating the difference between their ordinary and abnormal conditions of mental activity; but there is a more rational, intelligent, and, indeed, a more spiritual conception of the relations which should exist between mediums and their spirit 'guides,' which is rapidly finding favour with thoughtful mediums and Spiritualists alike. There is a 'more excellent way' of approaching the people of the unseen realm whereby good, not evil, accrues to both sensitive and spirit.

The co-operative association of medium and spirit on the plane of thought and purpose, emotion and motive, ethics and

inspiration, results in the education and elevation of the instrument and the increase of the knowledge of the operator as to the conditions on this side. So far from it being true that the effort to manifest is injurious to the spirit, we have known many instances where the communicating intelligence has declared—and given evidence of the fact—that he has derived great benefit from his association with the medium and the sitters who have assisted in the intercourse.

MERE 'DABBLING' DEPRECATED.

Writing in 'Light,' Mr. J. J. Morse says that 'Andrew Jackson Davis, Hudson Tuttle, and other writers, if I correctly understand them, claim that mediumship is a constitutional condition and depends upon nervous adaptation, *i.e.*, "sensitiveness," and the quickening of the subjective (psychical) faculties, while, personally, my own firm conviction is that there is nothing inherently dangerous in "mediumship." The mere dabbing in mediumship, as either the means of a new sensation, or for the gratification of personal vanity, is to be thoroughly deprecated, as a perversion of some of the most wonderful possibilities of our natures; while the prosecution of mediumship, or anything else, to the detriment of mind, nerves, or health, in any direction, is a sin against oneself, and will inevitably call down the resultant penalties of physical and mental deterioration. I have many times advised inquirers who wished to know how to develop mediumship, unless they desired to do so for serious use, and within proper limits, not to seek its development at all. And in cases where I could clearly see it would prove personally detrimental, I have strongly advised the inquirer to let the matter entirely alone.'

Very much depends upon the objects entertained by the medium and the sitters, as also upon the character and intentions of the spirit who seeks to manifest his presence; but, on general lines, where people of average intelligence and rectitude seek communion with those they have known

and esteemed, or loved, the results are almost invariably beneficial. There is every reason why this should be so if the common-sense precautions are observed of keeping a level head, exercising patience, exhibiting unselfishness and sincerity, and desiring good spiritual counsel and fellowship.

Mr. Morton truly says: 'Elevated spirits do not require mediums to surrender their reason; on the contrary, they advise that every new thought should be tested in the crucible of reason, and that it be rejected if not in accordance therewith; but the control of domineering spirits, claiming the names of celebrities, who present unreasonable theories and in a dictatorial "thus saith the spirit" manner, demand unquestioning compliance with their commands, must be rejected by all mediums as debasing and inconsistent with self-respect. Humility is a distinguishing feature of all true greatness and wisdom. . . . Any associations or concessions which have a tendency to lower the spiritual standard must be carefully avoided, for there is no growth in any relations which can only be maintained by the sacrifice of self-respect and self-justice.'

No medium should permit his love of approbation and desire for success to carry him away from the strict path of righteousness.

THE RATIONAL COURSE.

The rational course for mediums and inquirers to follow is assuredly that of avoiding the extremes alike of credulity and sceptical incredulity, by letting the spirits do their best and then collating the facts observed and drawing conclusions. Care, patience, and perseverance will save both mediums and inquirers from many misconceptions and enable them to avoid the errors of others. Above all, mediums should observe their own feelings, study their own experiences, try to understand and co-operate with the spirits, but never yield servile or slavish service, nor permit themselves to be swayed by flattery nor dominated by any spirit (in the circle or on the spirit side) who claims obedience, poses

as an 'authority,' or refuses to recognise the rights of others.

No medium should remain ignorant or refrain from giving effect to his (or her) natural desire for knowledge and self-improvement under the erroneous idea that he does not need to think, study, or learn, because he is a medium and the spirits will provide and teach through him all that is required. On the other hand, while thoughtfully observant of favourable conditions, and intelligent in self-study and culture, the medium should avoid 'getting up' certain subjects, or thinking along certain lines with the purpose and expectation that such information will be employed while under control. Such action, proceeding from a wrong motive, cannot fail to injure the psychic relations between the spirit and the medium, and will render the work of the control doubly hard, because such thoughts will have to be cleared away before those of the spirit can be transferred to, and have free course through, the medium.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PHENOMENA OF MEDIUMSHIP.

Every sensitive person is not a medium, but every medium is a sensitive.—'M. A. (Oxon).'

The evidence of man's immortality rests on spirit manifestations. Without them we could have no certain knowledge of the future life. I make this broad statement, including the manifestations of ancient times and of all races, but more especially is it true of the modern phenomena.—HUDSON TUTTLE.

THE phenomena by which spirits manifest their presence, demonstrate their power, and establish their identity are, broadly speaking, classed under two heads—physical and mental.

PHYSICAL PHENOMENA.

What the peculiar quality of mediumistic power for the production of sensuous evidences may be we cannot determine, but scientific students of 'the phenomena called spiritual,' such as Professors Hare, Mapes, Zöllner, Elliott Coues, and Hyslop, Cromwell Varley, Dr. Alfred R. Wallace, Mr. Myers, and Dr. Hodgson, admit that the manifestations are produced by the spirits through the agency of the 'psychic force' (as Sir Wm. Crookes called it) of the medium, who is able, when the conditions of the circle are favourable, to attract from the sitters still more of this power, which thus becomes centred in him. He is, so to speak, a storage battery that can be drawn upon at the will of the 'intelligent operator at the other end of the line.' This force is employed for the production of the

varied physical manifestations which have been observed in the presence of mediums, the determining factors in each case being the peculiar quality of the force, the capabilities of the mediums, the knowledge and power of the spirits, and the influence of the sitters or observers. Dr. Dean Clarke says: "Human magnetism, or nerve-aura, is probably the most sublimated form of ethereal matter, hence nearest in refinement to spirit-substance, and therefore spirits use it as the vehicle of their vibrating forces. Those persons who have an excess of magnetism of the proper quality, to unite with both the psychic force of spirits, and the forces inherent in natural objects, thus forming an electro-magnetic connection of spirits with the objects they wish to act upon, are the ones chosen as physical mediums. The mind and brain of the medium are not often, nor necessarily controlled, only his magnetism and psychic forces are used, through which spirits transmit the vibrations of their own power to mechanically produce concussions, or movements of material objects.'

Hudson Tuttle, writing 'automatically,' gave the following description by a spirit of

HOW PHYSICAL PHENOMENA ARE PRODUCED.

'Zoether (psychic force) emanating from the medium charges the object to be moved, and a band of spirits directs a current of their own zoethic emanation in the direction they desire the article to move, and it passes along the current thus produced. The charging of the object by the medium is necessary in order that it may be in a state of vibration harmonious to the spirit current. If this current be directed against the table or other charged body, raps or concussions are produced, as a positive and negative relation exists between the spirits, and the medium's zoether. One spirit alone cannot communicate in the latter manner; *i.e.*, cannot produce physical manifestations. If one purports to communicate, assistance will be rendered by many others, who combine their influence.'

The physical phenomena not only include the movements of tables and the production of 'raps,' but a variety of other manifestations come under this head, such as spirit lights; freedom from the effects of fire; the passage of matter through matter; direct writings on paper or slates; direct voices; levitations of the medium; spirit photographs; and the production of the physicalised or materialised form. Other occurrences might rightly be included in this list, but sufficient have been mentioned to indicate the extensive range of the results of the endeavours of spirit people to make their presence known by supernormal means. 'It is seldom that spirits can come into such direct and forcible contact with physical objects as to move them without the presence of a medium. This is occasionally done, however, as in the instances of haunted houses where no one in the flesh abides; also where earth-bound spirits appear as "ghosts" independent of the presence, or at least, at a distance from, any person in mortal form. But, as a rule, the magnetism of a medium, or, better still, that of a "circle," to furnish a bond between spirit and grosser matter, is necessary.'

Hudson Tuttle truly says: 'As the channel, so the stream which flows through it; the vessel gives form to the water which it contains. Each medium attracts a class or grade of spirits peculiar to himself. There must be affinity. These are attracted: first, because certain phenomena can be given through his organisation which cannot through any other; second, because certain thoughts can be transmitted through his brain which cannot through any other; third, because there is similarity or congeniality.'

MENTAL PHENOMENA.

Under this head are included involuntary, or 'automatic,' writing and drawing; clairvoyant perception of spirits, and the clairaudient hearing of spirit voices; prophetic utterances, personal or national; impersonating and inspirational control for 'test' purposes; and trance speaking for public addresses,

when the medium speaks while in the deep trance, or when his powers are stimulated and aroused to supernormal activity by inspirational suggestion.

Mediums are frequently so completely subjugated when entranced, especially in the private circle, as to be practically 'changed into another man,' as the Bible puts it. The 'impersonation' is so vivid that the spirit who thus manifests his own individuality, memory, and consciousness will sometimes cause the very features of the medium to change until they resemble his own, and the sitters can discern the likeness to their departed friend in the transfigured face of the sensitive. Psychometry, clairvoyance, and magnetic healing, when employed under spirit control, are generally upon a higher plane and deal with more spiritual conditions than when these powers are normally employed. These are the main divisions and phases of mediumship, each of which, however, includes a number of separate grades of manifestation.

We agree with Dr. Alfred R. Wallace, who pointed out, in his able lecture entitled 'If a man die shall he live again?' that mediums are of all ages and conditions, and the phenomena which occur in their presence have been subjected to the most critical examination by many clever and sceptical investigators, and their reality and reliability have been as thoroughly established as any of the great facts of physical science. We may therefore entirely discard the idea that imposture, except in isolated cases, will account for the manifestations that have been observed. Wherever the phenomena occur, whether in England, France, Germany, Spain, Russia, America, Australia, or India, they are of the same general type, while the individual differences among them show that they are not copied one from the other. Whether the mediums are educated or ignorant, boys or girls, men or women, savage or civilised; whether the phenomena are spontaneous or elicited in response to the desire of the recipients, the same general characteristics observable in

the results point to the unity of origin and the existence of certain laws which govern and determine the nature of the phenomenal demonstrations of the presence and power of the spirits. We conclude, therefore, that the phenomena occur within the scope of, and in harmony with, the general principles which govern the inter-relations of the spiritual and material realms, and are thus in strict accordance with the established order and laws of Nature.

A QUESTION OF EVIDENCE.

The identity of the spirits who manifest has been so frequently demonstrated that spirit action cannot any longer be denied by well-informed and impartial students. As Mr. A. Morton, an intelligent and thoughtful writer, very pertinently says: 'It is claimed by many sound thinkers that nothing should be attributed to the action of spirits which can be accounted for by mundane agencies. This attitude is worthy of adoption, as a rule, in the investigation of spiritual phenomena, but the converse is equally sensible; the agency of spirits cannot be disproved in the production of manifestations which cannot be shown to be of purely mundane origin. Students of spiritual science cannot ignore the laws of attraction and repulsion, of the inter-dependence of mortals and spirits; that would be equivalent to denying the foundation upon which they are building—playing Hamlet with the character of the Danish king omitted.' *

The whole matter is, therefore, one of evidence. Care should, of course, be exercised, and hasty conclusions are to be avoided. Nothing can be lost but everything may be gained by waiting. Slow and sure should be the spirit of the traveller along this road. He will then ultimately find that it leads him safely into the 'unseen'—the realm of spirit.

* 'Psychic Studies.' P. 205. By A. Morton.

CHAPTER V.

THE DIFFICULTIES AND DELIGHTS OF MEDIUMSHIP.

The Spiritualism that fails to spiritualise and elevate humanity is of little value to the world.

Mediums are born, not made, but sensitiveness may be cultivated or restrained. Mediumship is not a gift which can be arbitrarily given or withheld, it is a natural qualification. It is not abnormal except in the sense that it is not every individual who can experience to the full the value of spirit guidance or be influenced with the same degree of success.

THE development and exercise of mediumship are the most pressing need of the hour. The present dearth of physical phenomena is directly due to the abandonment of the practice of holding home circles. The investigator nowadays desires to 'see something' without the trouble of waiting for the cultivation of the incipient powers of a sensitive. Few people have the patience to join a circle of inquirers and watch and wait for results, and yet, unless more mediums are forthcoming, we shall shortly be in the position of those who can only point to the record of byegone evidences, but are unable to offer present-day proofs. Hence the study of the laws and conditions favourable for intercourse with people on the other side is never out-of-date. The existence of the psychical sensitiveness upon which mediumship depends can be best discovered, aroused, and regulated in the 'spirit circle.' The 'home circle' has been the nursery of most mediums of note.

THE TRUE 'COMMUNION SERVICE.'

The well-conducted home circle is the holy of holies of Spiritualism. It is there that the sweetest, fullest, most direct, and spiritual spirit communion occurs. It is there that the periodical seasons of comforting, refreshing and stimulating intercourse with loved ones can be most completely and naturally enjoyed. It is there that message after message, with all the cheering and satisfactory internal evidences of the presence, identity, and abiding affection of the dear ones, who are but just behind the veil, can be received. It is there that the care and counsel, the helpful guidance, the kindly warning, and the sustaining teaching of cherished friends can be, and frequently is, experienced in a continuous and convincing series of interviews, utterly impossible anywhere else. Home circles are, therefore, the very soul and salvation of Spiritualism.

CHILD MEDIUMS.

When mediumship is spontaneous with children it should not be repressed, neither should it be excessively exercised; nor should child mediums be made much of and their mediumship extolled in their hearing. The fact of their possession of the psychic power of seeing or hearing, or any other 'gift,' should be regarded as natural, and be accepted in a calm, common-sense manner; and by judicious encouragement and temperate use of their powers lasting good may result. Mr. W. J. Colville says: 'There are three vile ways of treating a mediumistic child: to call him a liar, and threaten him with awful punishment if he ever dares to talk again about such "rot" as spiritual insight; or to attribute his visions to illness, and dose him with nauseating medicines; or to tell him he is possessed with a devil, and get some ignorant fanatic to pray over him.' But there are still other unwise ways of dealing with a child medium; one is to tell him he is a 'wonder,' and praise him to other people before his face; another is to urge him to 'sit' against his inclinations, and by bribes or threats

compel him to try to exercise his powers until he is exhausted and permanently injured.

THE CONDITIONS REQUIRED.

Indeed, the question of the conditions essential for success in dealing with psychics of all ages is a very important one, and requires the greatest consideration. The 'sensitive' is susceptible to vibrations which others do not recognise, while he may be at times quite unresponsive to the ordinary vibrations which affect others. While entranced the medium experiences little or no sensation on the outer plane; yet he will be extremely conscious of, and responsive to, the states of feeling and modes of thought, or the spiritual conditions, of those who are around him, or those who are operating upon him from the other side. 'Investigators have again and again proved that the presence of some individuals promotes and aids the manifestations of spiritual power, while that of others absolutely quenches or nullifies it, and that in hundreds of well-proved cases in which human agency or fraud was utterly impossible. The most philosophical writers on occult subjects all testify that while honest scepticism is not obnoxious or injurious to mediumistic power, determined antagonism, ill-will, "hatred and contempt" are, and hence it is that strong prejudice, bigotry, and, above all, the proud, self-sufficient assumption of associative bodies, have invariably been found to quench and destroy the power they pretend to investigate.'*

INTELLECTUAL ICEBERGS.

Sitters may be sympathetic towards the sensitive instrument on the plane of intellect, may be sincerely desirous of the best results; they may, with thoroughly honest intent, seek to elicit phenomena which will satisfy their judgment of their spirit origin, and yet they may be on such a plane, psychically, that their conditions will not harmonise with those

* Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten.

of the medium. Their influence may be disintegrating, instead of unifying.

The inquirer of this type may say, 'I cannot understand it; I desire to discover truth and honestly wish to be convinced, and yet to mediums I am a "closed book," or an iceberg, for in my presence they freeze up and can give me nothing.' But his spirit friends, in seeking to demonstrate their presence and to prove their identity, find that his mental conditions and moral status—his spiritual environments—affect them more readily than his physical conditions. They will respond most easily to the spiritual frame of mind, and it is when the sympathetic spiritual relationship can be established that they can make the most successful demonstrations of their power Spiritual association depends largely upon the law and power of love, the unselfish spiritual emotion which prompts one to give. True love of the soul knows no reservations; it gives itself, unhesitatingly, and with complete faith. If the student can meet the loving spirits on this plane, with unselfish impersonal motives; without making demands, but ready to receive what they give; if he can meet them by aspiration, the angels can respond by inspiration.

It is, however, important to recollect that people of all sorts and conditions pass into spirit life, and if we open the doors that communicate with the unseen we must expect all sorts and conditions of spirits to press forward to reach us. William Denton used to say, 'Spirits are but men and women with their jackets off.' Hence communications from them should be held no more authoritative and sacred than the teachings of mortals. Both should be tested by reason and common-sense, and accepted or rejected accordingly.

The Rev. John Page Hopps says: 'I want to get myself and others accustomed to the thought that if people exist in another world they exist there as "people," not as fantastic, stately, solemn, or dreamy spectres:—that if a man exists beyond the change called death, he is still a man, unchanged except that he has put off his body, and glided behind the

veil: for a future life can only mean one thing, if it is to be a reality, and not a mere sentiment and solemn self-delusion, —it can only mean the actual going-on of the human being in spite of the incident called "death." If it is not that it is nothing: if it is not that, we are only indulging in vain fancies: if it is not that, we may be pleasant poets singing of a fairy land, but we are not actual pilgrims going to "a better country, that is a heavenly."'

IS MEDIUMSHIP DESIRABLE FOR ALL?

'M. A. (Oxon)' said: 'I do not think it would be reasonable to say that it is wise and well for everyone to become acquainted with mediumship in his own proper person. It would not be honest in me to disguise the fact that he who meddles with this subject does so at his peril. I do not say that peril is anything that should always be avoided. In some cases it is not, but I do say that the development of mediumship is sometimes a very questionable benefit, as in others it is a very decided blessing.'

This is therefore a case in which we may safely say, 'let everyone be fully persuaded in his own mind,' and act accordingly, with a due sense of the difficulties and responsibilities of the task. But do not venture if you are afraid. Fear hath torment. Fear makes cowards of us all, 'and blinds us to our being's best estate.' It lays us open to the enemy before we can strike a blow in self-defence. Ignorance is no protection against danger. The liability to the intrusion and control of undesirable people (both in and out of the body) is a constant risk, whether we know it or not. We may intensify the liability by seeking mediumistic unfoldment, but we do not totally avoid it by declining to become mediums, as the 'dweller on the threshold' is near us all the time.

The 'ostrich' policy of refusing to see danger will not avail us. To be forewarned is to be forearmed, and here, as elsewhere, knowledge, confidence, and pure purpose will

enable us to avoid pitfalls and overcome obstacles. Boldly facing the foe, we find that the 'perils' assume a far less threatening aspect. When we extend our sympathy and love towards them, but exercise our will, and discreetly hold the fort of our own psychic nature, the people of the lower spheres are powerless against us.

We, however, deem it right and necessary that those who essay to tread this path should know of its difficulties as well as its delights.

In the main we are aware that the dangers are those of ignorance and folly; of perversion, abuse, selfishness, and unspiritual practices; but that is not quite all that has to be said, as there are times when those who are sensitive—owing to ill-health, lack of tone, temporary difficulties, the influence of associates and surroundings, or some such causes—may become subject to influences (from this and the other side) that may affect them injuriously. But, as a rule, nothing is to be gained by dread, or by anticipating such contingencies (except that one may not be taken by surprise), and when they do occur, one has but to summon the forces of will, and, by supplication to the higher powers, obtain such inspirations and strength as to take captive those who seek to 'possess' or injure, and triumph by love.

However, let us continue the lesson which 'M. A. (Oxon)' gave. He said:—

THREE SERIOUS POINTS.

'In developing mediumship one has to consider a question involving three serious points. Can you get into relation with a spirit who is wise enough and strong enough to protect and good enough for you to trust? If you do not you are exposed to that recurrent danger which the old occultists used to describe as the struggle with the dweller on the threshold. It is true that everybody who crosses the threshold of this occult knowledge does unquestionably come into a new and strange land in which, if he has no guide, he is apt to lose his way.'

Commenting upon the foregoing, Mr. A. Morton truly says: 'That mediumship has its shadowy side it is senseless folly to deny, for nearly every investigator has had to encounter much that was mixed, mysterious, and questionable —has had to sift immense quantities of chaff to obtain a few grains of wheat; but that, once gained, becomes the bread of life; it is the fruit of the tree whose leaves are for the healing of the nations. In no other way than through the careful investigation of Spiritualism can we gain the absolute knowledge—the answer to the question of Job, "If a man die, shall he live again?" and know that life is continuous and progressive.

'The "dwellers on the threshold" are the spirits who passed away without having cultivated their spiritual natures, and the appellation does not apply exclusively to those who are prone to evil, but includes many who are bound by earthly ties through ignorance of the laws and conditions of spirit life.

'They may have led moral lives on earth, and have been debarred through religious training or prejudices from the study of life in the spirit world. Such spirits cannot be classed with the vicious, and only need to have the way pointed out to them to gladly hail the opportunity to progress beyond earthly environments, and are frequently brought to a realisation of their condition and position through coming into relations with mediums. Sometimes spirits of this class attempt to control mediums while still bound in the thralls of their old theological ideas, and give utterance to views which are tinctured with their earthly beliefs, but if earnest in their desires to obtain light they soon pass out of such conditions of darkness.'

TEACH THE SPIRITS.

Mr. Morton continues: 'Spirits who are in the conditions already described need instruction, and should not be repelled, but led to contrast their present state with that which they

were taught in earth life to believe was to be their portion after death, and to have the way pointed out by which they may obtain a knowledge of their true relations in the world in which they live. . . . The principal harm arising from having such controls is the conflict between their teachings and those of more advanced spirits, creating confusion and doubt in the minds of sceptics, or confirming some investigators in their beliefs in the erroneous teachings of theologians. Much good has been accomplished by well-developed mediums in assisting such benighted spirits to obtain a realisation of their spiritual condition, but this should not be attempted in a contentious or denunciatory spirit. Denunciation and intolerance are not consistent with the spiritual philosophy. All honest belief is entitled to respectful treatment, whether held by mortal or spirit; and if the belief is erroneous, the only kind and charitable way to correct it is to lead the person entertaining it to see the beauty and grandeur of the higher light.'

This brings us to the consideration of a practice which has grown to considerable dimensions, viz., that of holding séances for the purpose of inviting low and undeveloped spirits, with a view to help them to rise, to control mediums. This is a work for which only the wisest are fitted. There is ample scope for work in helping the fallen in this state of being and assisting those occasional visitors who may be brought to us by 'teaching spirits' for their own good, and to serve as an object lesson to the sitters—but to indiscriminately invite the dwellers on the threshold is dangerous.

Mr. Morton, when referring to the large number of the unprogressed, vicious, ignorant, sensual, and criminal spirits who haunt the threshold, says: 'They require restraint and repression to prevent their gratifying their propensities and desires through mediums who are not sufficiently developed or spiritually guarded against low influences,' and, we may add, the assistance of the sitters is required to help and protect the medium. He should not be encouraged to become

an 'open door' for such spirits to come through that they may revel in the recital of their past misdeeds, and endeavour to incite him to follow in their tracks, so that they may sympathetically gratify their base passions.

Truly repentant spirits find plenty of helpers on the other side; and those who desire to aid their fellow-men should turn their attention to practical reform, teaching, and helpfulness to those around them in this world who need sympathy and brotherly service. The best method of decreasing the army of low spirits is to assist them to rise in this world before they go to spirit-life. If we stop sending liars and knaves and self-righteous hypocrites into the other life there will soon be few to come back and obsess mediums. It is only under very exceptional circumstances, and with a well-developed and carefully-guarded and guided medium, that such séances as we have referred to should be held, and then only when advised by wise and powerful spirit friends.

APPRENTICESHIP NEEDED.

One frequent cause of trouble has been the tendency to rush young mediums into public work too soon. Painful experiences are often permitted to immature mediums by their spirit friends to teach them a needed and salutary lesson, viz, to retire into the private circle and serve their apprenticeship, so that they may secure proper development before they essay to become public representatives. They should avoid sitting for control when physically exhausted, or with sitters against whom they are warned by their impressions. They must learn to say 'no' with decision and never yield to the selfish importunities of unwise friends or 'phenomena hunters.'

The true friends of mediums will assist them in their endeavours to conserve their energies and guard against mistakes. Appreciation is welcome to us all, especially to sensitives, and cold neglect, or unresponsive reserve, chills and

wounds the highly-strung medium. Yet flattery and undiscriminating praise are likely to be equally injurious, by gratifying and stimulating the vanity and egotism of those who should modestly use their powers for the good of others. Here, as everywhere else, tact and judgment and kindly sympathy will work wonders.

THE DUTY OF SPIRITUALISTS.

'It is the sacred duty of believers in spirit communion and angelic ministrations to protect and assist, counsel and encourage, conscientious and earnest mediums, and save them from the disgrace of being classed with unscrupulous pretenders by requiring of all exponents of the principles of Spiritualism, and all mediums who exercise phenomenal gifts, an equal degree, at least, of truthfulness, honour, fidelity, and virtue as is expected from teachers in schools, colleges, and pulpits.'*

The medium who is protected by wise friends (in and out of the body) from flattery, and warned against self-conceit, is in a happy position. It is difficult, but necessary, to 'keep a level head.' The two most serious obstacles in the path of young mediums are the puffing of injudicious earthly friends and the extravagant promises of egotistic spirits, who 'fool them to the top of their bent' if they find them pliable, ambitious, and vain.

As a general rule, to use a homely but expressive phrase, 'birds of a feather flock together,' and unless there is some point of contact (it may be temporary only) low spirits cannot attach themselves to a medium. 'Degraded persons in this life do not seek associations which offer no opportunities for the gratification of their propensities, or, if casually brought into the sphere of their superiors in morality and intelligence, they soon desist from their evil efforts if met in a spirit of kindness, and this holds good as regards the law of associa-

*A. Morton, in 'Psychic Studies.'

tion between spirits and mediums.' A firm and decided, but kindly attitude, and a high-souled motive, will be a safeguard, especially when the sitters are sincere and high-minded also.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MEDIUMS.

It is important that mediums should recognise that they must share the responsibility for their utterances, and not seek to evade it by blaming the spirits. Speaking on this point, Professor Loveland says: 'I have heard mediums defend their utterances on the ground that it was not themselves but their controls who gave the objectionable language. But this will be found a poor defence in law, and a much poorer one before the bar of conscience. The primary responsibility is back of the act; it lies in the yielding to the controlling influence.' There can be no doubt that Mr. Morton expresses a great truth when he declares that 'It is not a valid excuse for any medium who is guilty of deception, or who indulges in sensuality, to charge his lapses from truth and other vicious practices upon decarnated spirits. The adage that "a man is known by the company he keeps" applies to mediums equally with other mortals, and the medium who continues to attract low influences should not be countenanced or sustained by decent people, nor be permitted to practise as teacher of a truth so sacred as that of communion with the loved ones who have passed from mortal sight. It is right that charity should be extended to those who are earnestly striving to overcome evil tendencies, even if they do occasionally stumble by the wayside; but the tricksters who persistently trifle with sacred matters deserve to be dealt with by strict justice. The admonition to "Go and sin no more" drew the veil of forgiveness and charity over past offences, but offered no excuse for continuance in wrong-doing.' This is the more true and imperative because 'It is within the power of mediums to attract a class of controls who will protect them from low spirits, except such as are brought to them to learn the way "from darkness unto

light." Away, then, with the fear of evil spirits; cultivate faith in the angels, and make your aspirations for the good and the true a wall of protection from all evil.'

SELF-PROTECTION BY SELF-POSSESSION.

A spirit friend of ours states that he is a member of a brotherhood in spirit life which has as its motto: 'Truth is our creed; love is our force; purity is our safeguard.' This is worth considering and employing in this world. No path is free from difficulty and danger, and the student in this realm will not find that ignorance is bliss, by any means. On the contrary, he must endeavour to understand and cultivate his own spiritual powers, and bend his energies in the direction of psychic self-mastery. We would urge our friendly reader to learn how to become positive to all influences calculated to injure, and receptive to impressions from, and the guidance of, those spirits who are intelligent and trustworthy. Self-realisation and self-possession on this plane are the true safeguards. Then the development of the psychic nature along the lines of spiritual aspiration, the wise and earnest seeking of the best and the highest, will bring happiness beyond compute.

The medium who maintains his health of body and vigour of mind will naturally experience the reactive educational results of his association with intelligent spirit preceptors. If his purposes are pure and high he will enjoy a fulness and richness of spiritual life which will amply compensate him for the supposed 'sacrifice of individuality' of which we hear so much. What gladness can equal that which must thrill him when he knows that through his agency the veil of death has been lifted, and sundered hearts again beat as one? What joy can compare with the happiness which the sensitive must experience when he knows that he has been instrumental in dispersing the mists of error and fear regarding the future life, and banishing dread of death and God from the minds of the doubting and distressed sufferers of earth? If the medium

is sometimes cruelly misjudged, wrongfully accused and condemned, the consciousness of having been true to right and truth will sustain him. The memory of the hours of exaltation, when, from the heights of spiritual illumination, the inner self looked out upon the great spiritual realm and rejoiced in its at-one-ment with the Supreme—when it triumphed over its limitations and realised its divinity and destiny—is a source of strength even in the darkest hours of reaction and human weakness. To hear, from the trembling lips of the mourner, the cheering words, 'Oh! thank you so much for letting my loved one come to speak to me'; or, 'That message, it has lifted such a terrible load from my heart'; or, after an inspired and inspiring discourse, the sincerely-spoken words, 'Thank you! Your address has *helped* me more than you know or can understand,' is recompense indeed to the medium for any trial or suffering he may have endured.

The delight of doing good; of helping others; of lifting the load of care; of ministering to the mind diseased; of wiping the tears from the mourner's eyes and making life worth living, because there is no death, is a perpetual joy. Surely, difficulties and dangers are worth facing and overcoming in the service of humanity and the angels, and for the good cause of Truth, when one knows the abiding pleasure which such altruistic labours can afford!

CHAPTER VI.

THE DIFFERENT PHASES OF MEDIUMSHIP.

There are diversities of gifts.—1 Cor. xii. 6.

What most puzzles me is, not that they [spirits] sometimes signal through the veil, but that they do not signal all along.—Rev. John Page Hopps.

When mediumship is truly understood, both less and more will be expected and obtained through its agency than has been the case hitherto. Less will be expected from those in spirit-life who give the bulk of the messages ordinarily received, but more will be demanded and welcomed from higher celestial sources, because aspirations will reach higher, and the science of spiritual telegraphy will be better understood.—W. J. Colville.

The objective phenomena which transpire in the presence of mediums are, as a rule, developed in what is called the 'spirit circle,' although there have been many instances in which these occurrences have been spontaneous, bursting out in the most unexpected fashion among people totally ignorant of the whole subject, and sometimes strongly opposed to the idea of spirits or 'ghosts' being near them. These manifestations are generally regarded as 'hauntings,' and are spoken of as due to the presence of evil spirits, but almost invariably they are found to occur when certain persons are present, such individuals usually falling under suspicion, although they may be the innocent agents from whom the unseen operators derive the power which they employ. These natural psychics unconsciously supply the spirits with the requisite elements for their manifestations; some of them do

not desire to become mediums; are not at all interested in the subject; do not feel called upon to suffer for or serve their fellows in the capacity of mediums, and are only prevailed upon with much difficulty to participate in the experiments which usually follow and which to other people are so important. Indeed, some mediumistic persons are strongly opposed to the whole thing, and keenly resent the actions of the spirits who draw upon their psychic force for the production of these phenomena.

RECORDS SHOULD BE KEPT.

When a medium for strong physical phenomena has been developed in a private and harmonious circle, records of the occurrences should be carefully made and signed, and the conditions under which the phenomena take place should be observed and accurately stated. The sitters should be guided by the wishes of the spirits, and refuse to admit strangers or visitors without their permission. After a time, as the development progresses, the medium and his spirit friends may be strong enough to undertake independent public work without the assistance and protection of a circle, in the same manner as did D. D. Home, Slade, Eglinton, and other noted public mediums; but they should be in no hurry about doing so, and they need to be very self-possessed and level-headed to hold their own against the 'phenomena hunters' on the one side (who sap out the very life of the sensitive), and the know-all, conceited sceptics on the other side (who freeze up all the psychic conditions), and before whom it is worse than foolish to cast these pearls of great price.

PUBLIC MEDIUMS NOT TO BE ENVIED.

The lot of the public 'physical,' 'test,' and 'clairvoyant' mediums is not to be envied or lightly chosen. Such sensitives frequently suffer a martyrdom that none but sensitives can realise. What with foolish flatterers; the sitters who are never content, but cry, 'Give,' 'give,' 'give';

the injudicious friends, who, seeing the exhaustion of the worn-out medium, in mistaken sympathy urge them to take stimulants (instead of securing them rest and change of surroundings), they have a hard road to travel, and our sincerest sympathy goes out to them all. We plead for them. We bespeak kindly and humane consideration. Too frequently they are tried and condemned unheard. They are expected to prove that they are *not* frauds instead of, as in other cases, being accepted as reputable people. So much has this been the case that some mediums of unquestioned power have retired into private life and business pursuits, where they meet with the respect and recognition which were denied them while they were public workers in the ranks of Spiritualism. Let us not be misunderstood. In saying this we are not apologising for, or palliating fraud or wrong-doing, but merely asking for fair and considerate treatment—not hasty, unreasoning condemnation. While it is true that mediumship has many compensations, and the medium who takes pleasure in his work has many pleasant experiences, it is also true that the public professional medium is too frequently subjected to treatment which makes his task more difficult and thankless than it need be. The kindly and appreciative treatment which they receive from some sitters is a welcome stimulus, and affords good conditions for the spirits, who are thus enabled to operate to the best advantage.

THE VALUE OF PHENOMENA.

Physical phenomena are especially valuable when they afford evidences of spirit identity. Materialisations seldom supply proofs of the personal identity of the operators, but are interesting displays of the skill of the spirit modeller in building up a palpable form. A writer in the 'Harbinger of Light' very forcibly says: 'A good psychographic medium will usually obtain writing between closed slates, which may be brought by the investigator, who can insist upon their not leaving his sight, and not even leaving his hand. We have

obtained writing on paper that we had previously marked, which was then covered by our own hand and a friend's, and was untouched by the medium. On another occasion, a slate which we had personally cleaned was laid on the floor (fully six feet from the medium) with a small piece of pencil under it (in broad daylight), and on taking it up shortly afterwards there was found written on the under side a long message of a private nature from a deceased friend, of whom we were not thinking. Such phenomena as these are still good and impressive, they cannot be counterfeited under like conditions, and even when no proof of identity is given in connection with the writings, they point so distinctly to the action of a discrete disembodied intelligence as to compel the recognition of their spiritual origin. The evidential utility of physical phenomena lies in their being inimitable by fraud. Colourable imitations can of course be made which might satisfy the credulous and gullible, but the conditions for testing the phenomena we have specially referred to are so simple that no rational investigator need be deceived; first, to be sure that the slate, paper, or panel to be used is perfectly blank; second, that it does not leave the hand of the inquirer, or if it does, that it is marked in such a way that there can be no doubt of its identification when it returns to them; and thirdly (with paintings), to observe if the paint be wet, and note the time occupied in their production.'

NOT ALWAYS ENTRANCED.

Mediums for the production of physical phenomena are not always entranced, as the power can be drawn from them and utilised for many striking manifestations while they are in their normal condition. Professor Loveland says: 'Many of the best mediums in the world were never entranced in the sense of being in an unconscious sleep. And it is doubtful whether that condition is desirable. The Fox girls, and most, if not all, the original rapping mediums, were never in the deep sleep trance. It is not necessary for any of the

physical manifestations, and that includes a very large per centage of all the spirit phenomena. The rappings, tippings, movings, slate writings, automatic writings, paintings, telegraphing, voices, materialising, &c., can all occur without the sleep trance, the reason of which is very apparent, as in the production of such phenomena the spirits simply use the surplus radiated nerve-force of the medium.'

Sir Wm. Crookes, when speaking in 1895 of D. D. Home and Eusapia Paladino, said :—

'Most, if not all, of the occurrences with Eusapia seem to have taken place when she was in a trance, and the more complete the trance, the more striking the phenomena. This was not always so with Home. Certainly the two most striking things I ever saw with him, the fire test and visible forms, were to be observed while he was entranced, but it was not always easy to tell when he was in that state, for he spoke and moved about almost as if he were in his normal condition ; the chief differences being that his actions were more deliberate, and his manner and expressions more solemn and he always spoke of himself in the third person, as "Dan."

DARKNESS NOT NECESSARY.

'When he was not in a trance we frequently had movements of objects in different parts of the room, with visible hands carrying flowers about and playing the accordion. On one occasion I was asked by Home to look at the accordion as it was playing in the semi-darkness beneath the table. I saw a delicate-looking female hand holding it by the handle, and the keys at the lower end rising and falling as if fingers were playing on them, although I could not see them. So lifelike was the hand that at first I said it was my sister-in-law's, but was assured by all present that both her hands were on the table, a fact which I then verified for myself.'

Mrs. Everitt, of Hendon, London, constantly receives evidences of the presence of her spirit friends while she is

perfectly normal. We have heard rappings and witnessed movements of physical objects in her presence, while holding friendly conversation with her, when we have been in a good light. Frequently, at meal times, the spirits announce their presence by raps, and respond to the salutations and questions of their medium and other members of the family.

SIR W. CROOKES AND D. D. HOME.

Sir William Crookes said: 'Home always refused to sit in the dark. He said that, with firmness and perseverance, the phenomena could be got just as well in the light, and even if some of the things were not so strong, the evidence of one's eyesight was worth making some sacrifice for. In almost all the séances I had with Home there was plenty of light to see all that occurred, and not only to enable me to write down notes of what was taking place, but to read my notes without difficulty. Home was very anxious to let everyone present be satisfied that he was not doing any of the things himself—too anxious, I sometimes thought, for frequently he would interfere with the progress and development of what was going on by insisting that some sceptic or other should come round and take hold of his hands and feet to be sure he was not doing anything himself. At times, he would push his chair back and move right away from the table when things were moving on it, and ask those furthest from him to come round and satisfy themselves that he had nothing to do with the movements. I used frequently to beg him to be quiet, knowing that, if he would not move about in his eagerness to convince us of his genuineness, the strength of the phenomena would probably increase to such a degree that no further evidence would be needed that their production was beyond the powers of the medium.'

'During the whole of my knowledge of D. D. Home, extending for several years, I never once saw the slightest occurrence that would make me suspicious that he was attempting to play tricks. He was scrupulously sensitive on

this point, and never felt hurt at anyone taking precautions against deception. He sometimes, in the early days of our acquaintance, used to say to me before a séance, "Now, William, I want you to act as if I was a recognised conjurer, and was going to cheat you and play all the tricks I could. Take every precaution you can devise against me, and move about and look under the table or where else you like. Don't consider my feelings. I shall not be offended. I know that the more carefully I am tested the more convinced will everyone be that these abnormal occurrences are not of my own doings." Latterly, I used jokingly to say to him, "Let us sit round the fire and have a quiet chat, and see if our friends are here and will do anything for us. We won't have any tests or precautions." On these occasions, when only my own family were present with him, some of the most convincing phenomena took place.'

D. D. HOME AN UPRIGHT MAN.

In justice to Mr. Home, perhaps the most wonderful medium of modern times, we insert here, in addition to what has already been said, the following tribute to his nobility and sincerity by Sir Wm. Crookes: 'I think it is a cruel thing that a man like D. D. Home, gifted with such extraordinary powers, and always willing, nay anxious, to place himself at the disposal of men of science for investigation, should have lived so many years in London, and with one or two exceptions no one of weight in the scientific world should have thought it worth while to look into the truth or falsity of things which were being talked about in society on all sides. To those who knew him, Home was one of the most lovable of men, and his perfect genuineness and uprightness were beyond suspicion, but by those who did not know him he was called a charlatan, and those who believed in him were considered little better than lunatics.'*

* 'LIGHT,' January 19th, 1895.

NOT TRIVIAL OR UNWORTHY.

We need not do more than refer, in passing, to the objections of those who regard the tilting and rapping of tables, the ringing of bells, and other phenomena of the kind as 'trivial,' and 'undignified,' and 'unworthy of spirits from the other world.' We do not deem it trivial or undignified to lift the knocker and rap the door, or ring the door bell, when we call upon our friends and wish to make them aware of our presence. May it not be our materialistic tendencies which compel the spirits to employ physical means of reaching us, because 'having eyes we see not, and having ears we hear not,' and are unresponsive to all their appeals upon the more spiritual plane? Further, this asserted 'unworthiness' assumes the very point which the phenomena are intended to prove, viz., that there *are* people in the other world to communicate with us. Sceptics have doubted and denied the existence of the spirit world, and so the spirit people have been compelled to choose these methods to break through the materialistic incrustations with which we have surrounded ourselves. By and bye, possibly, we shall obtain the open vision and the listening ear, and instead of compelling the spirits to come down to our level we may ascend to their plane of light and 'know as we are known.' But, until then, the outward and visible signs and wonders will still be requisite, and physical demonstrations of 'psychic force,' 'associated with, and governed by Intelligence, demonstrably other than that of the mediums and the sitters,' will still be efficacious, as they were with Sir Wm. Crookes and Dr. A. R. Wallace.

HELPFUL SITTERS.

There are many persons who, although they are not particularly mediumistic, possess a peculiar psychical power which is very helpful to young mediums. They are good sitters in a 'developing circle.' They may not do anything, or say much, but their influence is congenial, and sensitives

like to sit beside them. These persons are fountains (or reservoirs) of force which the spirits can draw upon, and the medium is thus greatly assisted by their presence.

CONSCIOUS MEDIUMS.

Persons of the mediumistic temperament, although they do not have objective evidences of spirit presence, or even the personal experience of spirit influence to the extent of being controlled, may yet be conscious that they *are* acted upon by, and receive ideas, suggestions, and impressions from, outside intelligences. They act and speak 'on the spur of the moment'; they see things 'with the mind's eye'; they are conscious of being impelled—even *com*pelled—to do or say things which apparently bear no relation to what has gone before, and for which, if challenged, they cannot give any satisfactory reason. They simply *had* to do it.

FOREIGN CONTROLS.

It is a common experience for a sensitive, in the early days of his development, to be influenced by foreign spirits and to find himself more or less consciously uttering sounds which, for aught he knows, may be the merest gibberish. There are several reasons for this. One of the most frequent causes will be found in the fear of the medium that he may in any way be a party to deception or even deceive himself. Owing to this feeling he resists all the attempts of the spirit to compel him to speak, lest it should be the result of the operations of his own mind in some unknown and inexplicable fashion, and thus, while he desires development, he renders the efforts of the spirits nugatory by his nervousness. It is, moreover, generally affirmed that Indians are natural Spiritualists, and are, therefore, experienced in such matters. When they reach the other side they are able to exert a more powerful influence upon mediums than the spirit friends and relations of the sitters can do, because they lived a more physically natural life, with fewer strains and drains upon

their psychic and vital forces than Europeans are compelled to endure, and are therefore more magnetically positive. Then, too, they have less to *un*learn, and are more observant and apt in adjusting themselves to their new environments. Not only so, but a sensitive when under their influence is not able to understand what is being spoken by and through his lips, and does not grow nervous and antagonistic as he would do if English words were being uttered; consequently he feels that he is not speaking of himself, and allows the influence to proceed—generally with a curious feeling of detachment from himself which awakens a desire to see what will be the outcome.

FRIENDS AND PROTECTORS.

Many Indian spirits become true and faithful friends. They act as protectors—'doorkeepers,' so to speak—to their mediums. They do the hard work of development in the circle, and prevent the intrusion of undesirable spirits. Sometimes they are boisterous and exuberant in their operations and manifestations, and, while we do not share the prejudices which are expressed against them, we think it is wise to exercise a restraining influence over their demonstrations. They generally possess strong healing power, and frequently put their mediums through a course of calisthenic exercises—which, although beneficial to the health of the medium and, in the presence of a few friends, may pass without adverse comment, would probably cause criticism if performed in a public assembly. Personally, we are deeply indebted to spirits of this class, who have been trustworthy helpers and kindly counsellors, and we gratefully make this acknowledgment as a matter of justice and right.

IMPERSONATING AND TEST MEDIUMSHIP.

An impersonating medium is one who is so thoroughly controlled by a spirit as to accurately represent and display the characteristics and peculiarities of that spirit. The test

medium when entranced, whether in the deep unconscious condition or in the semi-trance state, will often reproduce the symptoms of the illness, and enact the scene of the last few moments prior to the release of the spirit from the mortal form. Such impersonations are generally so exact and striking, and are so often accompanied by ejaculations which call to mind the last earthly utterances of the spirit who is seeking to manifest, that they are of a most convincing and consoling character. It is, however, unwise for sitters to stipulate that certain 'tests' must be given to them before they will believe, because the anxiety and the strong desire which they experience when visiting mediums, frequently disturb the delicate psychic and mental conditions, and so prevent success. If, however, the particular test should be given by the medium it might then be open to the objection that it was a case of 'telepathy.' The best attitude is to keep an open mind, encourage the spirits to do their best on your behalf, and judge the results on their inherent merits.

TEST MEDIUMSHIP.

When a spirit desires to establish his identity he has to endeavour to make the instrument speak his *exact* words, so that he can give names, dates, and relate specific details of his earth experiences, and, if possible, use phrases or other turns of speech which were characteristic of him while here, so that they will be familiar to his friends and carry to their minds the conviction of his real presence. To secure this result a very close *rapport* must be established between the spirit and the medium, and the 'control' must be as perfect and as nearly 'automatic' as possible. Unless the instrument is extremely sensitive and responsive, the entrancement must be very deep to insure success.

'RELIABLE' MEDIUMS.

We have frequently received applications for introductions to a 'good and reliable' 'test' or 'business' medium, or

clairvoyant. It will be easily understood, from what has already been said, that success will largely depend upon the sitter and the conditions provided by him. We may recommend the inquirer to a medium who is sincere and honourable, but the psychic or mental conditions of the sitter may be of such a nature that they will not harmonise with those of the medium, and under such circumstances (although both sitter and medium are honest and well-intentioned) little or nothing of any value can be given or received. But the same sitter, visiting another sensitive with whom harmonious psychic vibrations can be established, may find the spirit both able and willing to transmit even more than he expected or desired. It is well, therefore, to bear in mind that communications from the other side are liable to be affected by a number of influences, and while we are aware of the limitations on *our* side, we may profitably recognise that there are many difficulties which hamper the spirit communicants on their side. The fact is that to a very large extent the spirits are groping their way to us as we are feeling our way towards them, and therefore patience, forbearance, and kindly sympathy are needed in the endeavour to obtain trustworthy messages.

IMPERSONATING SPIRITS.

The mind of the medium may interfere with and affect the message. He may wrongly interpret the thoughts that reach him. The expectancy or anxiety of the sitter may disturb his psychic perceptions. Other spirits may interfere. Well-meaning but unwise and self-assertive spirits—both in the body and out—may entertain and express ideas which they sincerely believe, but which are nevertheless misleading, or entirely mistaken. We know how difficult it has been in some famous legal cases to identify certain individuals, even on this side, and it is of necessity still more difficult to be quite certain that we know and can identify spirit visitants.

Some inquirers have experienced much trouble and

annoyance with 'impersonating spirits' who have sought to pass themselves off as relatives or acquaintances, or have posed as famous historical personages. As regards the latter class, it is so impossible to prove or disprove their claims that we are inclined to ask them for evidences of intellectual and spiritual power and brilliancy equal to the recorded capabilities of the persons they assume to be. We attach no value to names—we judge the message according to its rationality and real worth. But as regards spirit impersonators who claim to be relatives and friends, and fail to substantiate their claim, let us point out that it is a step gained when the inquirer is compelled to recognise that they *are* discarnate spirit people. The old test, 'by their fruits ye shall know them,' holds good. Test messages go a long way as proofs of identity—but there is a subtle psychical relation—and there are many little things, feelings, intuitive perceptions, and responsive heart stirrings, which we experience apart from, and in addition to, what is *said* or done—that carry conviction; or that arouse us to the consciousness that some spirit pretender is at work. We are not afraid that level-headed people will be misled very far; and those who are not sufficiently emancipated to feel above the fear of Satanic agency, but dread the power of what they call 'demons,' had better let the subject entirely alone, and go in for a course of rationalistic self-development and 'higher criticism.'

DEGREES OF TRANCE.

What is called 'trance mediumship' is seldom of the nature of the deep sleep of entire unconsciousness.* It is more frequently the suspension of the ordinary consciousness of external surroundings, a temporary oblivion on the outer

* There are any number of degrees of trance, from the state of complete catalepsy to the feeling of simple quietude, or passiveness, as it is sometimes termed. We find the same variations in our natural sleep; from the profound and dreamless slumber to the half-waking condition.—'Essay on Mediumship.' PROFESSOR LOVELAND.

plane—a semi-conscious state, in fact—in which the subject does not retain the volitional ability to employ his thinking powers. They have been 'switched off,' so to speak, and respond to the will of the control.

In the case of 'speaking' mediumship, where general and philosophical ideas are to be transmitted, the control is of a different order from that exercised for test manifestations. It is more frequently of the nature of 'suggestion.' The spirit mesmerist suggests to the sensitive a certain train of ideas, and then stimulates the brain and the organs of expression to do the work of dressing up the thoughts and giving them utterance. Unless the subject is a scientific or a biographical one, in which specific terms are required and accurate data are to be imparted, the relationship between the 'inspired' speaker and the control partakes more of the character of the engineer who feeds the fire and directs the movements of his engine, while the machine does the work, than it does of the actual voicing of the exact words, embodying in a full and complete fashion the ideas the spirit wishes to have expressed.

THE RELATION BETWEEN SPIRIT AND MEDIUM.

At first the operator may succeed but very imperfectly in stimulating the brain of the sensitive and causing the cerebration and expression of his thoughts. The utterances may bear but slight resemblance to what the spirit intended to express. The vocabulary is that of the medium and the form in which the speech is cast of necessity partakes of the mould familiar to the sensitive—but, by continued close association and frequent control of the medium, the operator gains experience which enables him to exert a more decided influence; and the sensitive, becoming attuned, responds to and expresses the thoughts of the spirit with greater clearness and precision. Just as those who dwell together unconsciously approach nearer to each other and acquire a similarity in their mode of thought and of expressing their ideas (the more dominant personality impressing itself upon the less positive),

so the medium imperceptibly, and very often unconsciously, acquires facility and proficiency in thought and elocutionary expression as the result of the co-operation between himself and his spirit guide.

Here is where the work of 'development' comes in, and this is why a medium should not be rushed upon the public platform before his powers have been tried and evolved by continuous association. Both spirit and medium need experience and the education which mutual experiment and association afford.

WRITING: 'AUTOMATIC' AND 'IMPRESSIONAL.'

In 'automatic' writing the hand does the work—and, as was the case with 'M.A. (Oxon.),' the mind may be separately engaged in reading or study. In some instances both hands of the medium are employed simultaneously, and he does not know what has been written until he reads it afterwards.

When the writing is 'impressional' the sensitive knows beforehand what will be written, or is conscious of what is being given as the hand writes. In all such cases the messages—including those which present statements of matters of fact of evidential value in establishing the identity of the spirit—should be judged on their own merits by the usual standards, and should *not* be accepted reverentially as true and authoritative simply because they come from an excarnate human being. If the thoughts are wise and helpful and the diction clear and forcible or beautiful, then such writings are worth keeping for their intrinsic value.

PROGRESSIVE DEVELOPMENT.

Many mediums pass through different phases in the course of their development. At first they obtain tilts, possibly raps; then their hands are moved and they write; subsequently they are unable to keep their eyes open and they fall asleep. They are sometimes compelled to make 'passes' over themselves and others; they know *what* they are doing,

but lack the power to resist or prevent it. Their next impulse is to try to speak, and they gurgle and gasp and make inarticulate noises; or shout, laugh, cry, or sing, and probably finish by talking some jargon which *may* be an unknown tongue, or merely a series of sounds without meaning. By-and-bye they are more deeply entranced and are impelled to utter a prayer, or make a short speech. Probably some spirit claims to relate his experiences, and impersonates his death scene more or less successfully. A number of spirits may control the medium in rapid succession, being unable to 'hold the fort' for more than a few minutes each. As time passes the entrancement deepens, and one or two spirits claim to be 'guides' and begin to direct proceedings from their side. Addresses are given in the trance or semi-trance state, and then the return to more normal mediumship begins. In some instances the eyes open and refuse to shut; the medium becomes more conscious while speaking; and finally the exalted, inspirational stage is reached. The medium attains the 'superior condition' and is now able to normally employ his psychic energies, and, as a clairvoyant, clairaudient, psychometrist, healer, or orator, can intelligently exercise his natural abilities, assisted and stimulated in the work by his spirit friends. He thus enters into self-possession and reaps the aggregate educational results of his past abnormal experiences. The fruits of the co-operation are seen in the marked increase of the medium's normal power and ability.

CHAPTER VII.

PYSCHICAL SUSCEPTIBILITY AND MEDIUMSHIP.

A medium is necessarily extremely susceptible—as susceptible as a needle trembling to the Pole, and quivering to the slightest disturbing cause; and hence, unless cautious and guarded, is liable to be imposed upon.—HUDSON TUTTLE.

WHEN we come to deal with the development of mediumship in Part Two, and the cultivation of psychic powers in Part Three of this 'Guide,' we shall treat more fully of the methods for eliciting the susceptibility to spirit influence and the normal exercise of psychic gifts, and therefore present these branches of the subject at the present time in their general bearing only, leaving the more specific elaboration for the later sections.

Clairvoyance psychometry, and magnetic healing are frequently developed in mediums by spirit operators, but all those who possess and employ these powers are not of necessity mediums—any more than all orators, singers, and writers are of necessity inspired or controlled—they may or may not be. Those who are naturally sensitive can themselves cultivate and use these faculties, or they may be assisted in that work by excarnate intelligences.

The Rev. Dr. R. Heber Newton says: 'There is something in that strange power by which a man can read the past on a lock of hair or a scrap of handwriting. These are the new powers entering into the life of man, as man enters into the life of spirit. Whereas, a few years ago those powers were

the belongings of but a few—the mystics and the sages—they are now coming within our ordinary humanity. It is the coming of the Kingdom of God among men.'

MEDIUMSHIP AND PSYCHOMETRY.

There are two kinds of psychometry, the *passive* and the *active*. In the passive phase the recipient simply waits to be acted upon by the influence, and registers the impression produced; but in the *active* stage the psychometer pushes out on an exploration on his own account, determined to wrest from the soul-world its secrets. He not only *seeks* the information, but obtains it by becoming consciously identified with the person or place or object under consideration. The experimenter may be both a medium and a psychometer, but the difference, as stated by Mrs. Denton, is this: 'The medium is dependent for the information he receives *as a medium* upon intelligences foreign to his own—upon others; hence the necessity for him to be passive, that his will may not intercept nor his opinions colour the communication being given through him. The psychometer must depend for any information he may be able to acquire upon his own powers of recognition, of comprehension, of discrimination—largely upon his own judgment—as to whether he is confounding different scenes, characters, and conditions, or holding them severally distinct and true to their own belongings.'

But many mediums are employed by their spirit friends for pyschometric experiences. While normally unable to give such readings, their spirit guides are able to do so through them. Still, Mrs. Denton's contention is undoubtedly, in the main, correct, and those mediums who study, and seek to develop, their own powers, almost invariably find after a time that they can successfully obtain results while in the normal state, which formerly could only be attained when they were 'under control.'

In almost all phases of mediumship this tendency is

observable. The cultivation of the pyschic nature and the evolution of its powers under the abnormal stimulus of the 'suggestion' and magnetic influence of the spirit operator, result in the permanent liberation of those faculties, and as the outcome of the education thus acquired, the medium is ultimately normally benefited, and can consciously employ those powers and co-operate with his spirit friends, so that instead of being a blind, unconscious automaton he becomes an intelligent co-worker with them. Many speakers who at first had to be entranced before they could address an audience become, at a later stage, very successful normal speakers, either with or without the inspirational aid of their spirit friends.

THE POWERS OF SPIRITS LIMITED.

We now know that spirits do not oust the medium and occupy his body and brain, as one tenant follows another and takes possession of a house. The spirit does not provide and dictate the actual words to be used by the medium, save in very exceptional cases, but acts upon him by 'suggestion,' by impression, by thought-transference, and by *stimulating* his natural capabilities. The spirit cannot *create* abilities; he can only quicken and intensify those which are latent. He cannot cause the medium to exceed the range of what is possible to him when his dormant powers are cultivated, but he may, and frequently does, cause him to transcend his ordinary abilities, and ultimately brings up the normal expression to the plane of the abnormal.

Hudson Tuttle emphatically expresses his opinion that: 'A medium cannot be controlled to do anything against his determined will, and the plea that he is compelled by spirits is no excuse for wrong-doing. The medium, like anyone else, knows right from wrong, and if the controlling spirit urges towards the wrong, yielding is as reprehensible as it would be to the promptings of passion or the appetites. While in this earth life the duties and obligations contracted therein are

paramount to all others, a proposition which must be admitted by all right-thinking spirits. The medium who is unbiased in his own mind cannot be led away from right-doing by the influence of mortals or spirits.'

UNSATISFACTORY SÉANCES.

How much depends upon the sitters as regards the success or failure of any given séance? Some people who visit mediums are almost invariably successful; others seldom, if ever, obtain clear and convincing evidences of spirit identity. It is difficult to always determine what are the causes of these differences. There is some peculiarity of sympathy, of psychic *rapport*, which is not necessarily mental or moral, and yet it is an openness of soul requisite for success. There may be a good deal of truth in the following, by Lucy A. Mallory:—

'The reason why there is so much that is unsatisfactory in the communications from discarnate spirits is because those seeking communications do not understand how to put law into harmonious operation. In the first place we must have acquired self-control before we can receive anything satisfactory from the spirit world. If our being is not in order we can get only confusing messages. But whoever will put themselves in proper condition can have communication with the spirit world, and there is nothing life can offer that gives such perfect satisfaction. No evidence will positively satisfy the soul below the plane of its own consciousness.'

SEEING, 'SENSING,' OR PERCEIVING?

Miss Rowan Vincent, during her career as a medium, gave hundreds of 'descriptions' which were recognised by the recipients as accurate portrayals of their deceased relatives and friends, yet could not affirm that she actually *saw* them. She gave some interesting definitions of clairvoyance when speaking at one of the meetings of the London Spiritualist Alliance. She said it was as natural for a man or

woman to exercise clairvoyance as to employ the ordinary powers of vision. There were several kinds of clairvoyance. There was the kind which saw clearly the vision before it, just as the normal sight beheld the objects of everyday life. Then there was a type of clairvoyance which beheld visions in a dream-like fashion, sometimes scarcely able to realise that it was clairvoyance. Again, there was the clairvoyance that seemed only mentally to apprehend the picture or vision. Some clairvoyants could see into closed boxes or sealed packets, others could see across oceans and continents. These kinds, however, belonged more to the mesmeric condition, and were not often found in the normal clairvoyant. The clairvoyance that found favour with most people, however, was that which described the forms, features, and characters of those who had gone from our midst. In such cases the seer was enabled to draw back the veil that hid one world from the other; and his clairvoyance became a sacred gift, and as such should be esteemed by both the giver and the recipient.

IMPRESSIONAL CLAIRVOYANCE.

Mr. W. H. Bach, in his little work on 'Mediumship and its Development,' expresses the opinion that clairvoyance and clairaudience are both 'impressional.' He points out that 'clairvoyants see with closed eyes and in the dark as readily as, and in some instances better than, in the light.' He affirms his belief that 'clairvoyance is a result of an impression produced directly upon the brain, and that the same holds good in regard to clairaudience.' Passivity, *attention*, and responsiveness are needed to develop these phases. Some clairvoyants, however, claim to *see* spirits as though they looked at them with their eyes. Mrs. Bessie Russell-Davies, herself a remarkably successful seer, claims that 'clairvoyance is our "spirit vision," the sight our souls see with. . . . By it we see clearly what is positively obscure and unseen by natural sight. Spiritual objects are seen by it more easily

than are physical objects.' The *causes* why some people and not others possess the power of 'clear seeing,' she thinks, are yet to be discovered, although the faculty frequently runs in families for generations.

MENTAL PICTURES, IMAGES, OR VISIONS?

When a clairvoyant describes a spirit near to a sitter and fills in the details of his personal appearance when in life here, and those delineations are of so vivid a nature as to convince the recipient that the person thus described is in reality a departed relative, it is considered a good test of the clairvoyant's power. But a little thought will convince the student that the vision was not a spiritual one in the sense of discerning the visitor as he really is in his new state of existence. The seer either witnessed a partial materialisation, or described an appearance (a picture presented to his psychic vision), or what had been impressed upon him by the spirit operator. The seer depicts the spirit as wearing the garb, and presenting the appearance which characterised him here. But no one will claim that the people 'over there' wear the same clothes and are unaltered in their personal appearance since they died, as we call it. If the clairvoyant saw our friends as they are seen by their fellow-spirits we should find it very difficult to recognise them. The child who died a babe is seen as a babe, although ten or more years have passed since he entered spirit life, and spirits unite in assuring us that children grow and develop in the spheres beyond the tomb.

NOT WHAT THEY SEEM TO BE.

The aged and infirm are frequently depicted by clairvoyants as still aged and bent with the weight of years; yet spirits tell us that all appearances of age and infirmity drop away from them soon after entering the spirit state. Hence, while no doubt the spirit thinks back, so to speak, and projects an appearance of himself (a thought-form) as he was, for *the purpose of recognition*, clairvoyance, in the sense of

seeing as a spirit among spirits, has not been exercised, although it has been a true exercise of mediumship. An experienced mesmerist when he has a good subject can cause that subject to see pretty much what he *wills* him to see. He has but to concentrate his thought and visualise an object or person clearly in his own mind, to sympathetically transfer the image to his sensitive with more or less distinctness. There are, however, so many grades of psychic perception, or lucidity, that it is difficult to determine where impression ends and sight begins, and where that which is seen is merely a temporary thought-form, a picture, a partial materialisation, or *bonâ-fide* spirit sight. Only experience, careful observation, and continued experiment can settle the point in any given case or with any particular medium.

A SUGGESTED EXPLANATION.

Thought-transference may help us to form some idea of the process by which visual impressions are produced. If an operator draws a rough outline of an object, and then, looking at the drawing, seeks to visualise and hold that picture in his mind's eye, and, by the exercise of his will, endeavours to project and transfer the thought-picture to a sensitive; and, further, if the sensitive is sitting passively yet expectantly, is all attention to receive the positive impression, and it is thus transferred, we have an experience which is, we think, largely analogous to (if not identical with) what happens in impressional clairvoyance.

We fully recognise that there are various kinds and degrees of clairvoyance, as the experienced mesmerist and Spiritualist knows, and we do not claim that the above-suggested explanation covers the whole ground, but it does seem to us adequate for this particular class of experiences.

SPIRIT ACTIVITY AND BODILY SLEEP.

Mr. W. J. Colville says: 'Spirit communion of the most satisfying and consoling nature is frequently enjoyed in sleep,

and to render this communion thoroughly efficient as a panacea for doubt and sorrow, it is by no means necessary that on awaking the one who has been enlightened and consoled in sleep should remember any of the detailed circumstances of a vision or a dream. Intromission to the spiritual state surpasses many lesser mediumistic experiences, as it causes an unmistakable feeling of assurance within the one who has experienced it, while even the most convincing tests or proofs coming through another, supply less direct evidence than one's own original experiences. The problem of sleep is now receiving, as well as inviting, far more attention than formerly, largely on account of the excellent results which often follow upon mental suggestions given to sleeping patients. We call particular attention to the sleeping state as that of interior or subjective consciousness; never are we *un*conscious. The phrase "unconscious trance mediumship" is one which needs qualifying, and is seldom appropriate, as it by no means explains the recorded experiences of the many sensitives who, when in a superior or exalted state, are conscious of spiritual experiences, though unconscious of what is going on in their material vicinity.'

MAGNETIC AND SPIRIT HEALING.

Healing power is possessed in some degree by many people who are not strictly of the mediumistic temperament, but, as they are charged with an abundance of vital, or 'magnetic,' force which is unused by them, it would probably be productive of discomfort, if not disease, were it not for the fact that Nature has made health as catching as disease, and their auric emanations act beneficially upon others who need healing and unconsciously draw to themselves some of this abundant force. Nature ever works towards harmony, and strives to readjust inequalities. Those persons who are of the full-blooded vital temperament should try to relieve the aches and pains of those with whom they associate, for in relieving others they themselves would be benefited, provided a

sympathetic feeling could be established. But no one should attempt to magnetise others towards whom they cannot exert kindly feelings, and no sufferer should submit to magnetic treatment by a 'healer' who does not inspire him with confidence and respect. Unless the magnetiser has gained confidence from study and experience and is guided by intelligent spirits who understand the methods of healing, it would be unwise for him to attempt to treat an illness of a serious nature.

THE LAYING ON OF HANDS.

Dr. Dean Clarke claimed, in the 'Banner of Light,' that: 'When the mind, both conscious and "sub-conscious," has full magnetic connection with, and control of, every organ in the body, health prevails. When it has not, a condition called "disease" prevails; and whatever method will re-establish the normal state is a true art of healing. If there is too little magnetism to properly charge the nervous system it must be supplied from some source, or if there are obstructions to its proper circulation they must be removed or overcome. The experience of mankind, ancient and modern, has proved the efficacy of "the laying on of hands," by which the vital magnetism of the healer is imparted to the patient to "reinforce" his own exhausted or depleted vitality.

'The art of imparting the subtle vital force inherent in the nervous system of man and animals was known centuries before either physiological or psychological science had dawned to explain it. In quite modern times Mesmer revived the ancient art, and presented a theory of explanation which, if not complete, has never been overthrown, though later-day hypnotists have essayed to destroy it by denying his basic idea of animal magnetism. Granting all that may be claimed for the power of thought, or for mind acting upon mind, it would be just as rational and as scientific to attempt telegraphy without electricity, as to attempt hypnotism or mental healing without the use of nerve-aura or magnetism. The mind does not, and probably cannot, act upon the body with-

out the intermediate agency of what has long been called animal magnetism. Insulate any portion of the nervous system from magnetic connection with the great dynamo, the brain, and the mind ceases to control that part of the organism thus cut off from magnetic connection with the brain, and if this insulation continues, paralysis of those parts or organs follows.'

SPIRIT HEALERS AT WORK.

'Spiritual science proves that human magnetism is but one of the factors of healing. It is the vehicle of all other power, but not the principal healing force, which is spirit-power. Every very successful healer, whether Spiritualist or "Christian Scientist," has his own mental and spiritual power reinforced by a "spirit band," or battery, if we may so speak. He or she may not be conscious of such aid, for spirit-power is so subtle that it may act through the magnetic atmosphere of the healer *unawares*. Clairvoyants can see the spirit-healers at work doing "absent healing," and psychometrists can sense their personality as decarnated human spirits, and not the "Holy Ghost," as was once supposed, and as is believed by "Christian Scientists" to-day.

'But usually the healing power from spirits, as well as mortals, is very sensibly felt. All "mediums," whether healers or not, often feel very strongly the magnetic force through which they are influenced or controlled by spirits. It thrills their nerves, and not infrequently produces spasmodic jerking of the muscles or limbs. To claim that they are entranced, or otherwise influenced, solely by the force of thought or "suggestion," is to ignore the universal experience of thousands of psychic sensitives.

'Our own personal experience for twoscore years is conclusive. We *know* whereof we affirm. We are positive that magnetism is the connecting force between mind and body, and also the intermediate force used by "controlling spirits," whenever their thought *inspires* ours, or they impart healing balm to cure the sick.'

INDIVIDUALITY DEVELOPED, NOT 'LOST.'

There is no need for the student to decline to be influenced, or 'controlled,' by spirit friends for fear of 'losing his individuality,' any more than he should insist upon asserting his freedom and refuse the aid of tutors, lest they should infringe upon his sacred 'individuality.' What are called the *un*conscious phases of mediumship generally lead up to loving co-operation with the wise and kindly souls of the higher life in efforts to establish the fellowship of man, to bring knowledge where ignorance now reigns, to banish the darkness by the light of that spiritual communion which shall yet be a blessing to the race, and 'reliance upon higher powers in or out of the body does not mean that we sacrifice our own abilities, nor do we thus become exempt from responsibility. Quite the reverse. It is the arrogance of individualism against which we protest. In fact, there is no abiding strength of purpose apart from the dependence every well-ordered mind should accord to the infinite Life and Wisdom and the beneficial services which His wise and loving ministering spirits can render to us if we are desirous and responsive.'*

SPIRITUAL UNFOLDMENT THE GOAL TO BE WON.

Spiritual growth is not necessarily identical with intellectual development or will culture. Although it may be assisted thereby, there is danger of intellectual pride and self-glorification unless the motive and the method are both right. Excess or perversion is likely to be injurious either in self-surrender or in self-assertion. We need to be careful that we do not fall into the error of supposing that what ordinarily passes for 'education' implies spiritual unfoldment. A great deal can be said in justification of the outcry for educated mediums, but we shall do well to remember that knowledge of the mechanics of speech, or the technicalities of the schools

* 'Light of Truth.'

of either science, philosophy, or religion, does not constitute soul-culture or *educe* the *spiritual qualities* belonging to the medium. Let us have educated mediums by all means, but let that education include the exercise of moral and spiritual powers and graces, as well as mediumistic 'gifts.'

REACTIVE RESULTS BENEFICIAL.

We agree with the 'Harbinger of Light' when it says: 'There is no reason why the reactive consequences of frequent control by enlightened and earnest spirits, even in the case of the "trance" medium, should not prove extremely beneficial to the sensitive, and this, we believe, has been the case with many of the speakers in the movement. Where the medium is aspirational and ready to respond to the thought impulsions of the control, it stands to reason that the transmitted ideas, and the stimulation of the thought-faculties caused by the transference and expression of the spirits' opinions, will not be lost to the medium. "If you will take one step we can more easily help you to take a second than we could compel you to take the first if you were unprepared," said the spirit teacher to Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten, and there need be no loss of dignity or individuality, no injury to body or mind, but a gain of strength and spiritual vigour, education of mind and stimulation of moral purpose, by intelligent co-operation and temporary surrender on the part of the medium to wise and loving spirit helpers and teachers.'

CHAPTER VIII.

BIBLICAL AND MODERN MEDIUMSHIP.

Mediums can say, as did one of old, 'Must I not take heed to speak that which the Lord hath put into my mouth.' (Num. xxiii. 12.) ...

Take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate; but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour that speak ye. (Mark xiii. 11.)

The indebtedness of the clergy—if they knew their business—to Spiritualism was really very great. In the first place Spiritualism had rehabilitated the Bible. It could not for a moment be denied that faith in, and reverence for, the Bible was dying out, in consequence of the growing doubts of people regarding the miraculous parts of the Bible.—REV. H. R. HAWEIS.

IT would not be wise or right to close this explanatory treatise without dealing with the important and, to many people, the perplexing problem of how the inspiration of the prophets and apostles of the Bible compares with that of modern mediums.

It is admitted by an ever-increasing number of sincerely religious minds that there is a human element in the Bible, and that the writings which make up that book are not of equal value.

The passage, 'Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable,' &c., as it is now rendered in the Revised Version, leaves it an open question as to which Scripture is given by inspiration and which is not.

TWO KINDS OF INSPIRATION.

Inspiration may be both particular and general—that is, it may be an inbreathing from an individual source, or it may

result from the opening up of the inner powers of the spirit-self to the conscious reception of the inflowing thought impulses from the spiritual realm. We sometimes say 'thoughts are in the air,' and whoever becomes attuned to the same thought plane is acted upon by them. Like as water seeks its own level, so they flow into the soul that lies open to receive them. Dr. Eugene Crowell has well said

'INSPIRATION IS A PERPETUAL FACT.'

He affirms that: 'Inspiration, whether direct from the Divine mind, or mediately through the minds of spiritual agencies, is not a miracle of past ages, but a perpetual fact, operative now as of old, and it is the method which, under the operation of Divine law, is employed to elevate man to higher spiritual planes. "The preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord."—Prov. xvi. 1.

'"All men," says Henry Ward Beecher, "have hours in which they see and do not think. Men of genius now and then are luminous in this way. From their souls they throw light upon things, and know without reasoning."

'With all men of genius inspiration flows in upon their minds independently of any creative power of their own. Thus Schiller, in writing, "wondered whence his thoughts came from; they frequently flowed through him independent of the action of his own mind." Robert Burns at one time, sitting down to write, penned these lines—

"Which way the subject theme may gang
Let time or chance determine;
Perhaps it may turn out a sang,
Or probably a sermon."

'He was here in the best condition for the reception of spiritual influence, his mind being passive and consequently receptive—the proper mental condition of all true mediums.

'Mozart said he composed his music because he could not help it. "When all goes well with me," he says, "when I am in a carriage, or walking, or when I cannot sleep at night, the

thoughts come streaming in upon me most fluently; whence or how is more than I can tell."'

The Editor of 'LIGHT,' says: 'In the unceasing struggle for truth, we would make an obscurantist a present of all the old dogmas if he would only leave with us the admission that God still inspires the human spirit, and that the Heavenly Father can still guide His earthly child. Admit that, and the struggle is over: admit that, and we are free to shut the book and enter into the sanctuary of the soul: admit that, and it not only becomes our right but our urgent duty to revise all faiths in the light of the hopes, the inshinings, and the inspirations of our day: and then the battle is won.'

INSPIRATION FROM SPIRITS.

Inspiration from a particular person, that is, from a deceased human being, is a branch of the subject which has not yet been generally recognised, and which only Spiritualism will force the students and 'Higher Critics' of the Bible to consider and apply. Hitherto they have dealt with the question of inspiration from the point of view of its alleged Divine origin, whereas Spiritualism makes clear the fact of the probable influence of excarnate human beings, and this view is borne out by Acts (vii. 53), where it is said that the 'Law' was given by the disposition (agency) of angels, and we hold that the Bible contains many details of spiritual manifestations which can only be properly understood in the light of Modern Spiritualism.

In an admirable address of welcome to the delegates who attended the 'Parliament of the World's Religions,' held in Chicago, in 1893, the Rev. J. H. Burrows showed how the spiritualistic thoughts of the ministry and inspiration of excarnate human beings give vitality and breadth to the faith of the noble-minded people who recognise its truth. He said: 'It seems to me that the spirits of just and good men hover over this assembly,' and he went on to enumerate some of those who he believed were present, naming Paul,

Buddha, Socrates, Jeremy Taylor, John Milton, Roger Williams, Lessing, Abraham Lincoln, Tennyson, Whittier, and Philip Brooks.

MEN, NOT BOOKS, ARE INSPIRED.

It is necessary to remember that a *book* cannot be inspired, although human beings may enjoy such experience. It is also important to recognise that a statement is not necessarily true because it is inspired. We now know that a man may receive thoughts, and be subject to impulses 'from the other side,' and yet those thoughts may be misleading and the impulses sometimes such as should be resisted. The recipient may fully believe that the ideas imparted to him are Divine Inspirations, but his belief does not guarantee their Godly origin or their infallibility. The affirmation that 'Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost' (2 Peter, i. 21,) does not warrant the soundness of the statements which they made, or which have been attributed to them. No amount of inspiration can make a falsehood true, or an error accurate; consequently the test of the value of any inspired sentiment, teaching, or affirmation is to be found in its *truth* rather than in the source from which it emanates; and each reader is entitled to use his own judgment, and to be fully persuaded in his own mind. Inspiration affects the individual, and he cannot be inspired beyond his capacity to receive; therefore a perfect medium would be required for an inerrant gospel.

THE WORD OF THE LORD.

Much confusion of thought has arisen because of the modern misuse of the phrase, 'the Word of the Lord,' as though it meant the Bible, whereas it originally meant the message, inspiration, dream, or *spoken word*.

It is claimed 'that holy men of old spake as they were moved by the spirit,' but inspiration and guidance by spirits is not a miracle of past ages, it is a *perpetual fact*, which under the operation of Divine law is employed to elevate man to

higher spiritual planes. The prophets of old were 'forth speakers,' mediums, with all their human frailties and shortcomings. John Page Hopps says: 'The prophets were in the main the revivalist preachers and political reformers of their time. . . . It is when we ask how the prophets got what they called, or what others called for them, "the word of the Lord," that we find how near akin the ancient prophet was to our modern medium. He had visions, he was clairvoyant, he went into trances, he heard voices, or he was moved by an ecstacy that sometimes went perilously near raving.' All throughout the Book of Ezekiel the phrase, 'the word of the Lord came to me,' occurs. Clearly, it means 'the *thought* of the Lord'—or what the prophet regarded as such. In the second chapter Ezekiel says: 'And he said unto me, Son of Man, stand upon thy feet and I will speak unto thee. And the spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me.' Here is an illustration of how the 'word,' or inspiration, came to the prophet. When a modern speaking medium is 'influenced' and made to stand upon his feet, he too is (except when in the deep unconscious trance) able to hear him who speaks through him.

It was common amongst the Jews for the kings to keep their own prophets or seers; thus, 'The word of the Lord [or the impression, or message] came unto the prophet Gad, David's seer.' (2 Samuel xxiv. 11.) A further illustration of the functions of the prophets is given in Numbers xxii., where we are told Balak sends to Balaam to come and *curse* the Israelites for him. His messengers carry with them 'the rewards of divination.' Balaam invites his visitors to stay all night, while he consults his Lord. 'And God came unto Balaam, and said, What men are these with thee?' Balaam explains, and his God (guide) refuses to permit him to go and curse them. Balak thinks to buy Balaam, and offers great rewards; but Balaam says, 'If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold I cannot go beyond the word of the

Lord my God to do less or more.' And God comes unto Balaam *at night*, and directs him to go with them, 'yet the word which I shall say unto thee, that shalt thou do.'

From this narrative we learn that Balaam was a trance speaker and clairvoyant, that he received payment for his gifts, that the same power of divination, or prophecy, was used to *curse* or to *bless*. But the prophet of himself could do nothing. It was to be given to him in that hour what he should speak, as the spirit gave him utterance. Evidently it was the same power, gift, or mediumistic aptitude which in the well-disposed and true was called prophecy, while in the evil-minded it was called divination, enchantment, or witchcraft.

SPIRITUALISM EXPLAINS THE BIBLE.

Valuable as the Bible undoubtedly is as a record of man's spiritual strivings and experiences, it loses that value when unwarrantable claims are made in its behalf. Even its own pages bear testimony against the partisans who deny the possibility of the exercise of spiritual powers by man to-day, and the communion with the departed by earth-dwellers.

The Rev. H. R. Haweis, when speaking before the London Spiritualist Alliance, said: 'People now believe in the Bible because of Spiritualism; they do not believe in Spiritualism because of the Bible.' He continued: 'Take up your Bible and you will find that there is not a single phenomenon which is recorded there which does not occur at séances to-day. Whether it be lights, sounds, the shaking of the house, the coming through closed doors, the mighty rushing winds, levitation, automatic writing, the speaking in tongues, we are acquainted with all these phenomena; they occur every day in London as well as in the Acts of the Apostles. . . It is incontestable that such things do occur, that in the main the phenomena of Spiritualism are reliable, and happen over and over again, under test conditions, in the presence of witnesses; and that similar phenomena are recorded in the

Bible, which is written for our learning. It is not an opinion, not a theory, but a fact. There is chapter and verse for it, and this is what has rehabilitated the Bible. The clergy ought to be very grateful to Spiritualism for this, for they could not have done it themselves. They tried, but they failed.'

'ANGELS': WHO AND WHAT ARE THEY?

Many earnest people are sorely puzzled to know *what* to believe, because of the claim that is frequently made by theologians that the manifestations recorded in the Bible were not produced by human spirits but by special angels who never lived upon this earth; but, as Mr. Haweis said: 'If they cannot explain the miracles naturally we do not want explanations which make even greater demands upon our credulity. It will not do to assume the existence of celestial beings to account for occurrences which are incredible unless they can be naturally explained.'

The Rev. Moses Hull says Jesus promised that when he went away he would send a 'comforter'—the Greek reads *parakletos*, that is, a consoler—who was to teach the disciples, bring the sayings of Jesus to their remembrance, and guide them into all truth. Thus they were to be inspired to teach by a Holy (good) Ghost (spirit or guide), consoler, or comforter.

'MESSENGER' SPIRITS.

When we know that the word 'angel' literally means 'messenger,' and that it was applied to living men—prophets, priests, and others—we see how easily we may be misled by accepting the ordinary conventional interpretation which is put upon that word. The burden of proof that such personages exist as the alleged superhuman angels of Bible times rests with those who make the assertion. The Bible cannot be cited as evidence, for the term is there employed interchangeably with 'man,' 'spirit,' and 'Lord' to designate the spirit visitant, as anyone can see by reading in the tenth

chapter of the Acts the spiritualistic narrative of Peter's trance and vision upon the house-top, and the experiences of Cornelius, which are perfectly explicable in the light of the phenomena of modern mediumship.

That the word 'angel' was used as a synonym for 'spirit' is indicated in the passage where it is said that Peter's friends, believing him to be dead, declared 'It is his angel,' or spirit, when he stood knocking at the door after his release from prison by a spirit. Angels, we are assured, are 'the redeemed *from among the tribes of the earth*,' *not* super-human personages.

Paul, when writing to the Hebrews, said that he was 'compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses' (xii. 1). To whom could he possibly refer if not to the 'patriarchs' of whom he had just previously been writing? Surely they were human spirits? That this interpretation is legitimate is made manifest in the 23rd verse where he speaks of the 'spirits of just men made perfect' as constituting the innumerable host of angels. The word 'Lord' in like manner was used as synonymous with spirit, and with a similar significance to that attached by Spiritualists to the word 'guide' or 'guardian spirit.' Among others, Samuel, Moses, Elias, and Jesus are all reported to have manifested after death.

It was 'a *man's* hand' which appeared and wrote the mystic words of doom at Belshazzar's feast; and Daniel testified that he saw a certain *man* and heard his words, and a hand touched him and set him on his knees, and 'there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man' (x. 5, 9, 10, 18). Daniel heard the spirits (saints) conversing together (viii. 13). These 'saints' were once men on earth; see also Rev. xviii. 24. Gabriel is called both a man and an angel (or messenger spirit).

There is not the slightest shadow of a shade of evidence in proof of the claim that the angels referred to in the Bible were a supernatural order of beings. There are many reasons against the claim. What would such creatures know of

human sorrows, weaknesses, or trials? What would they know of human language, thoughts, and passions? How could they minister comfort to the sad and suffering souls of earth when they had never sorrowed or wept? Sympathy is born of fellow-feeling—they who have known what loss is can feel most for others in their bereavement. He who has been enslaved knows the value and joy of liberty, and can most truly sympathise with others who are slaves. Non-human angels would not comprehend the woes, temptations, struggles, and difficulties of mortal life, and would be unfeeling counsellors and incompetent comforters. The mother, mourning the loss of her beloved, would feel little consolation by being assured that one of these guardian angels watched over her. She would in all probability exclaim: 'What care I for your *angels*—they are strangers—I know them not. Oh! God, grant that my child may return; that I may know he lives; if only for a moment let me be assured that he is with me and loves me still.'

'TURNED INTO ANOTHER MAN.'

Samuel in his instructions to Saul clearly illustrated the nature of inspiration when he said: 'The spirit of [from] the Lord will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another man' (1 Sam. x. 6). This being 'turned into another man' is easily understood by Spiritualists who have seen mediums, under spirit control, 'impersonate' the appearance of the spirit and become so altered—transfigured, we might almost say—that the resemblance is clearly recognised by the on-looker. In 2 Esdras, x. 28, 29, 30, although regarded as apocryphal, we get the following description of a trance medium's experiences and sensations: 'Where is Uriel, the angel, who came unto me at the first? for he hath caused me to fall into many trances. . . . And as I was speaking these words, behold, he came unto me, and looked upon me. And, lo, I lay as one that had been dead, and mine understanding was taken from me; [he

was unconscious] and he took me by the right hand and comforted me, and set me upon my feet and said,' &c. On another occasion he says: 'Then I waked, and an extreme fearfulness went through all my body, and my mind was troubled so that it fainted. So the angel that was come to talk with me held me, comforted me, and set me upon my feet' (2 Esdras, v. 14, 15).

Although 'Job' is now admitted to be a poem, there are some important statements which indicate the prevailing beliefs of the people. For instance, we get the remarkable description of a spirit's influence over Job in chapter iv. 13-16: 'In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, fear came upon me and trembling, which made all my bones to shake. Then a spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up. It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof; an image was before mine eyes; there was silence; and I heard a voice saying,' &c. This description corresponds to the shaking or trembling which many mediums experience, and which has given the names to the sects called Quakers and Shakers. The following words might well be employed by a modern trance medium: 'Therefore have I uttered that I understood not, things too wonderful for me, which I knew not' (xlii. 3). And again, in chapter xxvi., verse 4, we find a question which indicates the belief in spirit possession, not by God directly, nor by supernatural angels, but clearly by human spirits, thus: 'To whom hast thou uttered words, and *whose spirit came from thee?*' Evidently it was a common thing for mediums to be controlled by different spirits. Almost all the phenomena associated with modern mediumship can be paralleled with quotations from the Old and New Testaments.

Space will not permit of an extended list of proofs of the claims we have made, and a few illustrations must suffice.

CLAIRVOYANCE.—'Elisha, the prophet that is in Israel, telleth the King of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bed-chamber' (2 Kings, vi. 12).

'And the Lord [spirit guide] opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw; and, behold the mountain was full of horses and chariots as of fire round about Elisha.' (2 Kings, vi. 17.)

A SÉANCE.—Elisha sat in his house, and the elders sat with him. The king sent a man to him, *but ere he arrived*, Elisha said, See how this son of a murderer hath sent to take away mine head, &c. (2 Kings, vi. 32).

SPIRIT VOICES.—Samuel heard the 'voice' when in the Temple.

Samuel was told 'in his ear' that Saul would visit him.

Peter heard the voice, 'Arise, Peter, kill and eat.'

Paul heard the voice, 'I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest.'

SPIRIT GUIDANCE.—Paul would have gone to Bithynia, 'but the spirit of Jesus suffered them not.'—Revised Version. (The King James' version left out the words 'of Jesus,' which specify *who* the spirit was, and it is most probable that similar suppression of undesirable facts has occurred in other passages.) (Acts xvi. 7.)

INSPIRATIONAL SPEAKING.—'Take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate; but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour that speak ye; for it is not ye that speak.' They 'began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.' (Acts ii. 4.) The narrative implies that these ignorant fishermen were controlled by spirits of different nationalities. How else could they have spoken in the languages of the various nations round about? It is not only far more reasonable, but, to our mind, the only probable explanation, to suppose that the spirit, or spirits, were departed Jews.

WRITING MEDIUMSHIP.—In 2 Chronicles, xxi. 12, we get the significant claim: 'And there came a writing to him from Elijah the prophet.' Mr. Stead, with his 'Julia,' is only repeating the claim here set down on behalf of Jehoram, for this is said to have occurred *four years after Elijah* passed away.

DIRECT WRITING.—The Commandments were written by spirit power upon tables of stone—probably slate.

SPIRIT WRITING.—'David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch and of the houses thereof. . . . and the pattern of all that he had by the spirit . . . All this, said David, the Lord made me understand in writing, by his hand upon me.' (1 Chron., xxviii. 11-19.) Again, in Daniel v. 5: 'There came forth the fingers of a man's hand, and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.'

DIVINATION.—Joseph practised divination (Gen. xliv. 15). Daniel was rewarded for his divinations (Dan. ii. 47-48), as also was Samuel by Saul.

PHYSICAL MANIFESTATIONS.—Gideon asked 'for a test' that a fleece might be wet with dew and the ground around it dry, and again the next night that the fleece might be dry and the ground wet, and it was granted (Judges vi. 37 and 40). It is hardly reasonable to suppose that the God of the Universe engaged in this task, and as it occurred in the dark, and without critical observers, the testimony is less valuable than that of the witnesses to present-day facts. Ezekiel (viii. 3) testifies that a hand took him by a lock of his hair, and the spirit lifted him up between earth and Heaven. We are told that an angel released Peter from prison. The house where the Apostles assembled was shaken, and angels, called 'young *men*,' are reported to have rolled away the stone from the door of the sepulchre, but this happened in the dark, when no witnesses observed its occurrence. Abraham is said to have 'waited in a horror of great darkness,' &c.

TRANCES.—'The spirit from the Lord will come upon thee and thou shalt prophesy [speak forth], and shalt be turned into another man' [*i.e.*, controlled by another man].

'I was in a deep sleep on my face toward the ground; but he [the man Gabriel] touched me and set me upright.'

'He hath said which heard the words of God, which saw the visions of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having

his eyes open.' Some mediums nowadays have their eyes open when entranced, others have them shut.

'The spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me.' (Ezek. ii. 2.) Some mediums are unconscious, others hear the spirit speaking through them.

UNCONSCIOUS TRANCE.—'Therefore have I uttered that I understood not, things too wonderful for me, *which I knew* not.' (Job. xlii. 3.)

'To whom hast thou uttered words? and *whose* spirit came from thee?' (Job. xxvi. 4) [Evidently there were different controls and they were known.]

CURIOUS CONDITIONS.

Conditions were required then as now, and sometimes very trivial means were employed, as when Jesus put his fingers into the man's ears, 'spit and touched his tongue,' and again, 'He spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle, and put it on the man's eyes.' Sometimes he required to be alone, or in the presence only of sympathetic friends. 'He put them all out and took her by the hand.' 'He took him, the deaf and dumb man, aside from the multitude.' 'He took the blind man out of the town.' (Mark viii. 23.) Prayer and fasting were necessary for certain phenomena, and bigoted opposition or strong prejudice militated against successful results. The disciples failed, and were rebuked by Jesus (Luke ix. 40, 41), but Jesus failed too, according to Matthew xiii. 58. 'He did not many mighty works there, because of their unbelief.' Honest and reasonable doubt is no detriment, though rancour is.

WHILE IT WAS YET DARK.

Spiritualists are often challenged to produce the phenomena in the presence of sceptics, and ridicule is poured upon them because the manifestations occasionally occur in the dark, or in the presence of but few witnesses. The Bible is

full of phenomena occurring under such conditions, as we have already shown, the most noteworthy of all being the record of the resurrection, which, we are told, transpired when no witnesses were present, and at night, for it was 'yet dark' when the women went to the sepulchre. Peter was released from prison in the night while the jailor slept. Peter was alone on the housetop. Cornelius was alone when the spirit appeared to him, and gave him what many people nowadays would call a trivial message, viz., to send to Joppa for Peter.

LAWFUL AND RIGHT.

'God forbids it,' 'It is unlawful,' are objections that are frequently urged; but the attempt to substantiate them by the aid of a few isolated texts of Scripture is manifestly absurd, for the simple reason that the passages quoted can have no possible bearing upon our facts. When challenged to fulfil the injunction to heal his sick friend by calling together the elders of the church, anointing him with oil, and praying over him, an opponent replied that 'the promise was only made to those who heard and received it, and did not apply at the present time.'

It is now generally conceded that the denunciations and warnings of Scripture were local, directed against people and practices of the times, and therefore they do not apply to Modern Spiritualism. Mediumship is a natural power which may be used with pure intent to do good, the same as any other. 'A man can receive nothing except it be given him from Heaven.' (John iii. 27.) Where are the greater works, the signs and wonders, the gifts of the spirit, the healings, visions, prophesyings and ministrations of angels that were to come? Outside of Spiritualism they cannot be found.

As to its being unlawful to hold intercourse with our departed friends, it would be as reasonable to declare telegraphy illegal. We are sometimes defied to produce any

Scripture texts which command or sanction spirit communion; one might as well refuse to ride in a train, or use the electric light, for there are no passages commanding the use of either.

Dr. S. B. Brittain says: 'It was the recognition of many inferior divinities to the neglect of the Hebrew Jehovah that called down the denunciations of Moses and the prophets. Among all men the Spiritualists would be the last religious body in the world to entertain the idea of reviving the polytheistic faith and worship of the ancient pagan nations. They are not hero-worshippers. They have not the excessive reverence which would render the apotheosis of any man a possibility in their history. As a people they have no agency in the business of fashioning and multiplying gods, either for themselves or others; and those who have made much progress accept no authority, visible or invisible, but Truth demonstrated.'

Some few objectors raise the cry, 'It is of the Devil,' but that has lost its power to scare the majority of people, since every good worker and work, from Jesus downwards, has been met with the same opposition.

AN UNHOLY ALLIANCE.

Materialistic scientists oppose Spiritualism, in the Bible or out of it, on the *a priori* ground of impossibility, because they refuse to admit the *existence* of the human soul, and repudiate the idea of supernatural interference with the order of the universe. But to find Christians joined in unholy alliance with them, using the weapons of Materialism against Spiritualism, is a sign of the times indeed, and proves that their professions of faith are *professions* only; at heart, in speech and practice, they evidence the fact that they are Materialists.

Epes Sargent, in his valuable work, 'The Scientific Basis of Spiritualism,' very truly says: 'The religion prompted by the facts of Spiritualism cannot differ largely in any essential

point from that of Primitive Christianity. This fact of Christ's re-appearance was the cardinal doctrine of the early Christians, their common faith and hope. It is for the very reason that Spiritualism has a scientific basis in known and demonstrated facts, that it offers the surest ground for religion. It proves to us the existence of ethereal beings . . . nay, it proves that our deceased friends are still alive, and, inferentially, that there must be a spirit-world, however impenetrable it may be to mortal sense.'

'SEEK AND YE SHALL FIND.'

The objection is sometimes raised that we have no right to *seek* to hold communion with spirits. It is urged that if we were intended to know we should not need to inquire, yet one of the earliest instances of a manifestation of spirit power (or what is recorded as such) is reported in Genesis xv., where Abraham *waited* for a manifestation from his 'God,' or 'guide,' and 'a deep sleep fell upon' him, and 'an horror of great darkness,' a 'smoking furnace and a burning lamp passed between the pieces' (verses 12 and 17). The priests in the temple constantly *sought* counsel, and they wore the Urim and Thummim for the purpose of 'crystal-seeing.' That it *was* customary to 'seek' for spirit guidance is evidenced by the fact that we are informed, quite as a matter of course, that Saul sought unto the Lord, 'but the Lord answered him not.' Joseph sought for guidance, and used a divining cup for the purpose. The whole story of Balaam indicates the same thing: 'Tarry ye also here this night that I may know what the Lord will say unto me more.' (Numbers xxii. 19.) See also xxiii. 3: 'I will go: peradventure the Lord will come to meet me.' That it was customary to visit mediums for the purpose of obtaining counsel and guidance is clearly set forth in 1 Samuel ix. 6 and 9. Nothing could be more definite. Saul is assured that Samuel is a man of God, and an honourable man. Then we get this explanation: 'When a man went to inquire of God, thus he

spake, Come and let us go to the seer: for he that is now called a prophet was beforetime called a seer.' The phrase,

'INQUIRE OF THE LORD,'

is frequently used, and indicates the common practice. Ezekiel was unquestionably a seer, a trance speaker, and a clairvoyant and clairaudient medium, if the record is trustworthy. The Rev. J. P. Hopps, in his 'Thus Saith the Lord,' says: 'The one little sentence—*Ezekiel was a spirit medium*—explains the whole book. He held regular séances, and the description of them in his book will be familiar to every Spiritualist. A few instances will suffice to show this. In chapter viii. 1, we read: "And it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I sat in mine house, and the elders of Judah sat before me, that the hand of the Lord God fell there upon me." This phrase, "I sat in mine house, and the elders of Judah sat before me," is, in the circumstances, a perfect description of a séance. The same formula occurs in other places. Chapter xiv. 1: "Then came certain of the elders of Israel unto me, and sat before me. And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying," &c.'

In chapter two of Daniel we find that Daniel, when requested to interpret the king's dream, seeks his friends, and they hold a séance over the affair, desiring guidance, and Daniel has a night vision.

JESUS A SPIRITUALIST.

We deny, emphatically, that Spiritualism is contrary to the practices of the prophet-mediums, and declare that *Jesus set the example* of seeking to communicate with spirits, for we find him selecting his beloved companions and taking them away from the people and holding a séance on the mountain, where he prayed and waited, and finally 'Moses and Elias' appeared unto them and talked to Jesus (Matt. xvii.).

Christians claim that they are now living under 'Grace,'

not under 'Law,' and excuse themselves in that way for non-obedience to certain Old Testament commands. If, therefore, we were to admit that the Mosaic commands against witchcraft, &c., applied to Modern Spiritualism (which we do *not* admit), we, too, can adopt the claim that 'the Law' of Moses has been superseded by the sanction and action of Jesus.

William Howitt well says: 'Jesus went to seek this spirit as if the case was studied literally . . . to Moses, the very man who prohibited such an act, and there on the mount broke the law before his face, and by his example taught his disciples to do the same.'

Jesus declared that God is more willing to *give* to the hungry-hearted than an earthly father is to give food to his offspring, and he made this emphatic promise, 'Seek and ye *shall* find, knock and it *shall* be *opened* unto you,' and this is a promise 'of the Holy Spirit to them that *ask* him.' (Luke xi. 1 to 13.) We might rest our case there and rely upon the plain meaning of the words, but we are assured that Jesus manifested to Paul (then Saul), 'I am Jesus whom thou persecutest,' and the revisers have been compelled to admit that *Paul travelled about under the guidance of Jesus.* 'The Revised Version contains' (says Rev. John Page Hopps), 'a small but very significant alteration. In Acts xvi. 7, Paul and Silas, when about to go into Bithynia, were forbidden, says the Old Version "by the spirit"; but the Revised Version says "the Spirit of *Jesus* suffered them not." What a revelation this is if we can accept it! Jesus had been dead, to use our poor blind word, for several years; and yet here were these Apostles travelling about under his guidance! We turn our cold critical eye, perhaps our eye of pity or contempt, upon people who talk of spirit communion, and yet here, as with the flash of light, we find spirit communion quietly referred to as a matter of fact and homely incident.'

Paul says: 'Concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant,' 'Covet earnestly the best gifts.'

'The manifestation of the spirit is given to every man to profit withal.' The gifts are enumerated as the word of wisdom (inspirational speaking), faith, working of miracles (physical phenomena), clairvoyance, the word of knowledge, healing, prophecy, tongues, and interpretation. All these gifts are given by the self-same spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. The same God worketh all in all.

How anyone can 'covet' and 'cultivate' spiritual gifts and exercise mediumship without *seeking* the aid of spirits and receiving their ministrations of comfort, we fail to see. We claim that Spiritualists are the truest believers in the Bible, the truest followers of the practices of the Bible mediums, and that those prejudiced and narrow-minded interpreters of the Scriptures, who decry Spiritualism as un-Scriptural, really do not know of what they are talking—'Having eyes they see not, and ears they hear not,' and the advice given to the silversmiths of Ephesus is most applicable to them: 'Let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men it will come to nought: but if it be of God ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.'

The value of mediumship consists primarily in the fact that it supplements and confirms the hopes and intuitions of the human heart and gives certitude in place of conjecture, knowledge instead of belief. This all-important result of the strenuous efforts of spirit people, of the noble fidelity of mediums, of the persistent devotion of the pioneer advocates of the facts of spirit intercourse, is now being recognised by advanced thinkers in all realms. The splendid services of the heroic but despised sensitives who bore the brunt of the world's scorn and contumely during the past half century are at last winning recognition, and the world's desire—its 'longing after immortality'—is to-day established as a conviction based upon demonstration—no longer a dream but a scientific assurance.

A GUIDE TO MEDIUMSHIP,

AND PSYCHICAL UNFOLDMENT.

BY

E. W. AND M. H. WALLIS.

IN THREE PARTS.

PART II.

HOW TO DEVELOP MEDIUMSHIP.

Descend, and touch and enter, hear
  The wish too strong for words to name ;
  That in this blindness of the frame
My Ghost may feel that thine is near.

. . . . . .

So word by word, and line by line,
  The dead man touch'd me from the past,
  And all at once it seem'd at last
The living soul was flash'd on mine.

TENNYSON.

'And more, my son! for more than once when I
Sat all alone, revolving in myself,
The word that is the symbol of myself,
The mortal limit of the self was loosed,
And passed into the nameless, as a cloud
Melts into heaven. I touch'd my limbs, the limbs
Were strange, not mine—and yet no shade of doubt,
But utter clearness, and thro' loss of self
The gain of such large life, as matched with ours,
Were sun to spark—unshadowable in words,
Themselves but shadows of a shadow-world.'

TENNYSON.

INTRODUCTION.

HAVING already explained the general aspects of mediumship in the first part of this 'Guide,' we deal in the following pages specifically and in detail with the more immediate and personal considerations involved in the development and exercise of mediumship, and give such advice to inquirers regarding circle holding, and the treatment of sensitives, as we, from our experience, deem necessary and helpful. In like manner, we seek to assist those who have had indications that they are mediumistic and that spirits are in sympathy with and influencing them ; as also to counsel those who desire to become mediums regarding the conditions for the development and the wise exercise of mediumistic powers.

In part three of this 'Guide' we shall present the methods to be followed by sensitives to intensify their impressibility and cultivate their psychic powers, but we now devote our attention almost exclusively to the exercise of the faculties of the inner self under the stimulation and guiding control of spirits.

Many mediums, when influenced by their spirit friends, display marked abilities as clairvoyants, character-readers and psychometrists. They diagnose the conditions of those who suffer, and are frequently used by healing spirits to magnetise the sick and cure the afflicted ; to give counsel, warning or encouragement to those who are worried and distressed in mind, body or estate.

As a reactive result of the influence of and continued association with such intelligent spirits, sensitives frequently find that they can normally exercise their own psychic faculties, and after a time can do so as successfully as when under spirit control.

Because self-respecting mediums may thus acquire the ability to consciously enter the 'superior condition,' that is no proof that they 'do it all themselves,' or that they 'never were assisted or controlled by spirit operators,' as some people have imagined. It merely shows how beneficial spirit guidance and influence have been, for by their aid they have acquired the power to reach up to the psychic or spiritual realm and become consciously associated with and to intelligently respond to the thoughts of spirit people and co-operate with them in demonstrating immortality and proclaiming the spiritual philosophy.

E. W. AND M. H. WALLIS.

PART II.

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PART II.

HOW TO DEVELOP MEDIUMSHIP.

CHAPTER I.

THE BASIS AND CULTIVATION OF MEDIUMSHIP.

Any form of mediumship which does not contribute to our own personal unfoldment or growth is something which we neither need nor want, and should therefore be most determinedly rejected.—LOVELAND.

A knowledge of the laws and conditions of mediumship is a primary requisite for the successful investigation of Spiritualism ; and to the neglect of this important preliminary may be traced most of the difficulties, contradictions, and disappointments which beset the road of even the most earnest and painstaking who enter the path of practical investigation.—W. H. TERRY.

MANY persons are natural sensitives, and are more or less easily swayed by the personal magnetism and positive mental influence of those with whom they associate. They 'take on' and reflect the conditions that surround them, although they may be unaware that such is the fact; and the study of the laws of psychic relationships would enable them to gain strength of character and of will. Such people are not infrequently stigmatised as 'changeable,' 'weak-minded,' 'erratic,' and 'unreliable,' because of their liability to be affected by their surroundings ; and they would profit by self-

study and by watchful attention to their varying moods, so as to cultivate a more positive and self-possessed attitude, and obtain self-control.

THREE GROUPS.

Speaking somewhat roughly, the majority of people can be classified into one or other of three groups: viz., Positives, or actors, those who exert a dominating influence over others; Negatives, or those who are liable to be dominated and manipulated by others; and an intermediate class, consisting of those who are positive at times and to some people, but negative at other times and to other people, or varying between positive and negative as they themselves change in physical conditions and mental moods.

It should, however, be borne in mind that an individual who is ordinarily a Positive may not always be so. He may occasionally meet with others even more positive than himself. His own conditions may alter owing to illness and other causes; or by his sympathy and confidence being aroused and won, he may be 'off guard,' so to speak, and become negative to those who usually would have no power over him.

SENSITIVENESS INDISPENSABLE TO MEDIUMSHIP.

'It is a fundamental proposition,' says Hudson Tuttle, 'that sensitiveness, or the capability of mediumship, is a faculty common to mankind, differing in degree—as hearing and sight are common heritage, but keener in some individuals than in others; or under certain conditions it may disappear.'*

The mediumistic temperament is often characterised by self-consciousness and diffidence, or by nervous self-assertiveness on the part of its possessor. People of this class are almost invariably emotional, enthusiastic, spontaneous, and ardent. Strong in their predilections, they are decided in their 'likes' and 'dislikes,' but are sometimes variable,

* 'Mediumship and its Laws: Its Conditions and Cultivation.'

volatile, and versatile. Zealous workers in what they feel is a good cause, they are generally stern and forcible in condemnation of what they deem to be wrong, but are seldom intractable. They are wounded to the quick by sneers and slights; but, while they may be resentful, they seldom sulk and are generally forgiving and ready to help others who appeal to their sympathies. 'Generous and impulsive, hot-headed too and independent, a close friend and a merry heart; too sensitive to criticism of an unkind nature; too easily pleased by praise; without malice, without revengeful thoughts; a warm-blooded man, with an ever present humour that gilds his conversation and makes his company well liked.' Such is the description given by an American writer of one through whose mediumship remarkable materialisation phenomena have been witnessed.

WHAT A MEDIUM IS.

A medium may be defined as a person who is constitutionally sensitive or susceptible to 'influences,' and responds more or less readily to the dominant thoughts, 'suggestions,' or impulses that impinge upon his psychic, or magnetic sphere; or one who freely generates nerve aura, magnetism, psychoplasm, or psychic force (whichever term may be preferred), which can be utilised by the operating spirits to produce the outward and visible evidences of their power and presence that are usually designated 'physical phenomena.' Spirits cannot manufacture the energy employed in the production of these demonstrations, and therefore they must draw upon the store possessed by the medium, who, where possible, unconsciously attracts to himself some of the psychic force of others.

'DIVERSITIES OF GIFTS.'

The assertion that is sometimes made that 'everyone is a medium' is somewhat misleading. It would be nearer the truth to say, 'Every one is a spirit,' and is therefore endowed with the qualifications which may be cultivated and exercised

with more or less success in one or other of the several phases of mediumship. This of course implies that there are not only 'diversities of gifts,' but different degrees of susceptibility; and the aspirant for mediumship will do well to remember that, to use a familiar and an expressive phrase, 'Many are called but few are chosen'; or, in other words, many are sensitives but few possess the physico-psychical, mental and spiritual qualifications for special excellence in any given direction.

While it is undoubtedly true that, broadly speaking, every one has some latent mediumistic power, the question is, as Mr. W. H. Terry says: 'Does the prospective result justify the labour involved to bring these powers into efflorescence? My impression is, that in at least three cases out of four, the time and labour it would take to develop this latent quality to its greatest efficiency would be far in excess of its value when so developed.'

Just as a drum, or a tambourine, is incapable of being made to emit a tithe of what can be produced by means of a piano or a violin in the way of music, so the differences in quality and conditions of the physical organisms, and in the degrees of nervous and psychical sensibility of those who desire mediumship, render it improbable that any but a small proportion will develop such extreme susceptibility to spirit influence as will repay them for the time and self-sacrifice involved in the cultivation of their powers. Further, it should be borne in mind that while wise spirits are ever ready to respond to the call of the earnest aspirant for spiritual truth, *as wise spirits* they are not likely to devote themselves to the preparation of an instrument that would be inefficient for their purpose.

The nervous system of the medium, whatever his phase may be, has to be trained to respond to the will and psychic force of the controlling spirit, just as much as the muscles of the musician or artist, and 'practice makes perfect' in the one as well as the other. Since mediumship

is a strictly natural qualification, depending upon organic fitness and susceptibility, it is not a supernatural power or a special 'gift,' neither does it insure the moral purity nor the intellectual ability of the medium, any more than musical or artistic capabilities are evidences of the special intelligence or the high moral tone of their possessors.

MEDIUMSHIP A FORM OF GENIUS.

The spirits who employed the hand of 'M.A. (Oxon),' once caused him to write a message in which they claimed that 'Mediumship is a development of that which is, in another sort, genius. Genius, the opened and attentive ear to spirit guidance and inspiration, shades away into mediumship, the facile instrument of spirit manifestation. In proportion as the medium becomes open to influence, directly exercised, is he valuable as a means whereby direct messages are conveyed; and in proportion as the individual spirit is lost and merged in the great ocean of spirit, is the result most direct and serviceable. . . It is when the passive spirit is content to allow us to use the corporeal instrument, as it does when itself operates, that we gain satisfactory results. That can only be when a condition of perfect passivity, as far removed from scepticism as from credulity, has been secured. This opening of the spiritual being to spiritual influences is what you call mediumship. It is rare yet, but not so rare as you imagine. . . The true and valuable gift is purely spiritual and must be used for spiritual purposes; not for gain, or for satisfying curiosity, or for base or unworthy ends.

NATURAL MEDIUMS.

Some people are more or less fully conscious of the companionship of spirit people. They frequently catch glimpses of those they have known and loved, or, under exceptionally favourable circumstances, are the recipients of clear impressions and striking phenomenal manifestations of spirit power. But these experiences are often annoying and troublesome, because

their friends are distressed by their 'peculiarities,' and imagine that they are not sane, or are doomed to an early death. If we may form an opinion by the testimony of many of our friends, the number of those whose spiritual experiences were inexplicable until they heard of and understood something of Spiritualism, is by no means small, and we have no doubt that there are a great many persons who are perplexed and often distressed, both in mind and body, to whom a knowledge of mediumship and the laws of spirit control would prove a great blessing.

SPONTANEOUS EXPERIENCES.

Those persons who are naturally sensitive sometimes experience strange and sudden impulses. Thoughts come to them 'in a flash,' so to speak. They say things spontaneously which they had not intended to say—the words seem to burst from them and to 'say themselves.' Others have equally sudden and fugitive clairvoyant experiences; they see spirits when they least expect it, and when they are absorbed in something else; but when they strongly desire to 'see' or to receive guidance, they get nothing. This state of things, in all probability, is due to the fact that their susceptibility is not sufficiently developed; their psychical impressibility can only be reached and acted upon under specially favourable conditions, which are disturbed and dissipated when the ordinary intellectual self is aroused. The remedy will be found in the systematic cultivation of interior repose and confidence. The psychic must learn to regard it as a perfectly natural experience that the spiritual states and positive thoughts of excarnate people should impinge upon his spiritual sphere, and while 'attentive to the holy vision,' should calmly accept the fact and maintain the attitude of response; not anxiously nor demandingly, but thankfully enjoying the spiritual communion and illumination thus afforded to him.

It is only natural that many people should desire to become mediums, and that they should wish to ascertain what consti-

tutes mediumship and what is requisite to secure its development. We often hear some such exclamations as the following: 'I *should* like to be a medium and to speak like ——,' or 'give tests like ——,' or 'have phenomena presented like those that occur with ——'; but those who express these desires should remember that in all probability months, if not years, of patient development have been necessary to ensure the ability and success they admire and probably envy.

THE 'SPIRIT CIRCLE.'

The 'spirit circle' is the assembling together of a number of thoughtful and sincere people for the purpose of establishing the means of intercommunion between the two worlds, and it has been found to be the simplest, readiest, and most effective method for the discovery and development of latent psychic and mediumistic powers. It is called by Hudson Tuttle 'the primary school for the study of spiritual facts,' and, we might add, the training of mediums.

Sensitives are sometimes *too* ready to respond to any and every passing influence, and to attribute their own moods and feelings, or purely natural sensations, to spirit influence. They are so eager to believe, and become so absorbed in the subject, that the veriest commonplaces assume exaggerated importance in their eyes, and they mistake for spirit action the indefinite and seemingly inexplicable impulses and sensations which they regard as promptings or impressions from the other side, whereas there may be perfectly natural physiological causes for them.

A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW.

It is a fairly safe rule, all things considered, not to attribute anything to the action or influence of spirits until the ordinary and more immediate and probable causes have been exhausted, or until the influence, or impression, becomes so clear and unmistakable that there can no longer be any

doubt as to its spirit source. But even then it does not follow that the spirit is one that the medium should trust and obey. He may be attracted, and even fascinated, but he must proceed cautiously and patiently, and by no means invite any and every spirit to influence him, in season or out of season. Neither should he implicitly rely upon the ideas, advice, or messages he receives. The spirits are of all sorts and conditions, and there are so many attendant circumstances and influences which limit the intercourse that great care and patience are needed, and every step on the road needs to be circumspectly taken. It is better to make haste slowly and be sure of the facts, than it is to believe credulously and afterwards find that mistakes have been made, or that misleading spirits have seen their opportunity—and have taken it—to practise upon the too eager faith and unquestioning acquiescence in their sportive plans.

There are mediums who have secured a certain degree of unfoldment and lucidity, and can give a fair amount of satisfaction to inquirers, but who are not strong enough to withstand adverse, critical, and chilling influences. They droop and fail in the presence of sceptical or cynical people, and ought not to venture before the public until their powers are more fully developed. In the happy private circle they are useful and render very acceptable service, and, possibly, after prolonged experience might become more positive, through the greater activity of their own spiritual nature, so that a larger work could then be successfully performed; but patience and persistent endeavour are requisite in this realm as in all others, so as to secure steady and orderly unfoldment rather than rapid but imperfect growth.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR THOSE WHO DESIRE TO BECOME MEDIUMS.

What has already been said will naturally suggest to aspirants for the possession of mediumship inquiry as to the nature and extent of the application requisite in their case to

evolve the essential condition for its successful exercise, and the result of which would test the strength of their aspirations and probably deter a large proportion of those who desire to become mediums, but are unwilling to devote time and energy to the necessary study, from attempting the task. This would be no disadvantage to them; it would save them much unprofitable work.

The editor of the 'Harbinger of Light,' of Melbourne, Australia, very forcibly and truly says: 'All mediums are liable to be affected by all sorts of subtle influences, such as a loss of magnetism on their own part; a lowered vitality; mental trouble; ill-health; excessive heat or excessive cold; an unsympathetic, hostile, or inharmonious circle; self-distrust, and a multitude of other disturbing circumstances. The more delicate the organisation, the more susceptible the medium to suffering from these adverse conditions; and the greater and the more considerate should be the care and watchfulness exercised over him by his friends. And again, the non-production of the results desired by the sitters does not depend primarily upon the medium, who is simply a plastic instrument in the hands of the controls, who may see many good reasons for not using his brain or voice. For they can perceive what the sitters cannot; and while the latter would go on working the powers of the medium to excess, the higher intelligences, with their finer appreciation of the delicacy of their instrument, and of the duty of carefully preserving it, will often put an abrupt and decisive stop to manifestations, which are always liable to become exhaustive. The simple truth is, that even those who have had the greatest experience in Spiritualism possess but a limited knowledge of the laws and phenomena of mediumship; but what they do know suffices to convince them that the ancient Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans acted very wisely in surrounding their mediums —priestesses, keepers of the oracles, and vestals, as they were variously called—with the best possible safeguards for the preservation and protection of their beautiful gifts.'

EARNESTNESS AND DEVOTION REQUIRED.

The crucial point of the whole matter is whether, granting that they possess the requisite natural capabilities, those who seek development as mediums will be prepared to devote themselves thoroughly and faithfully to the task of securing the coveted results.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox points out in a forcible manner the great need there is for earnestness and steady devotion to secure success. 'So many of us are shilly-shallying along life in these days. We do nothing seriously. We are in earnest about nothing. We all want to be multi-millionaires, and we are looking for sudden and quick methods of success. By success we mean accumulating a large fortune. Our eye is out for the sign, "A millionaire while you wait," as we pursue our daily avocations. Just as sure as the continual leaking of a faucet wastes water in a reservoir, so this continual frittering of our mental forces in frivolous and non-focussed thought wastes our moral and mental strength.

'The man who is in earnest not only brings the full powers of his own mind and soul to bear upon his project, but he draws about him the influences of invisible intelligences who people space and come to the aid of the deserving. Whatever your aim is at this moment, be in earnest.'

HOW TO DEVELOP MEDIUMSHIP.

The question, 'How can we develop mediumship?' may sound rather heretical to some Spiritualists, who would in all probability reply, 'What have we to do with development? That is the affair of the spirits. If they want us to become their mediums let them do the work and not expect us to do it for them.' This attitude of mind was a perfectly natural one when it was supposed that spirits were exalted beings, possessing supernatural attributes; but, as our knowledge of the psychical nature of man has increased, we have come to realise that the powers which are possessed and employed by

spirits already exist in us—dormant it may be, but inherent in our spiritual nature. This question then, 'Can mediums assist in the development of their powers, or must they blindly surrender themselves to be manipulated by people on "the other side" of whom they know little or nothing?' is one that requires careful consideration.

Admitting that the spirits are the prime movers in producing the phenomena which demonstrate their presence, there can surely be no objection to the desire on the part of sensitives to know how they can provide the conditions which will render them fit and proper instruments for the spirits to use; how best to supply them with the 'power'—physical, psychical, mental, or moral—which they require.

NOT MERE CONDUITS.

We unhesitatingly affirm that it is not necessary that mediums should regard themselves as mere 'conduits' through which the spirits are to pour just whatever they choose. Nay, we go further, and claim that if mediumship is to be lifted above the plane of mere sensationalism, mediums must study their own powers, and learn how to provide the conditions requisite for their own unfoldment, so as to exercise a determining influence over the results and share the responsibility as well as the pleasures and spiritual benefits accruing from the co-operative association. It is true that no one can become a medium solely by his own act, or by his own will; but surely it must be manifest that those whose attention and anticipation are directed towards the reception of intimations from the spirit side of life are much more likely to be affected thereby than those persons who are hostile—or, if not actively antagonistic, heedless and indifferent.

Although there are certain general rules which apply to mediumistic development each medium will require some special condition, or conditions, which will facilitate the best manifestation of his particular powers. Hence the urgent necessity that he should intelligently co-operate with, rather

than render blind obedience to, the spirits who seek to control him.

EVERY PHASE OF MEDIUMSHIP VALUABLE.

Every phase of mediumship is valuable, and should be used to the fullest extent for the demonstration of the truth, and where that work is carried out in the spirit of devotion and service the medium will assuredly receive direct and reactive benefits. There is really no 'high' or 'low' in mediumship. No one can exceed his natural capabilities; therefore, he who does his best in his own sphere merits appreciation, and the highest mediumship is in reality, so far as the individual is concerned, just that for which he is qualified. We have heard of '*low*' mediumship, and physical manifestations have been stigmatised as 'degrading,' &c., but the production of a 'rap' requires the exercise of positive spirit power quite as much as an inspirational address; and if by the agency of the raps, or the table movements, messages of a convincing and consolatory character are transmitted to the sitter, they are of greater value—*as evidence* of the personal presence and the identity of excarnate spirit friends—than the most eloquent oration. Mediums do not make their own physical organisations. It is not to the credit of one that he has clairvoyant or inspirational powers, or to the discredit of another that he has purely 'physical' capabilities; but it *is* to the credit of each one who does his best to keep himself in tune and fit for use, so that *his* powers may be exercised at their best and highest, whatever his phase may be. Remember—

> 'Nothing useless is or low.
> Each thing—in its place—is best;
> And that which seems but idle show
> Strengthens and supports the rest.'

MEDIUMSHIP STIMULATES LATENT POWERS.

Dr. Dean Clarke truly says: 'Physical phenomena are very pleasing to some persons, but actually repulsive in the eyes of others. Temperament largely accounts for preferences

and antipathies, and temperament also has a great deal to do with the special bent of one's qualifications, no matter in what direction. It may be safely affirmed that individual taste largely reveals particular ability, and it rarely if ever happens that anyone develops to a large extent and successfully any phase of mediumship that does not closely accord with the general trend of nature and disposition.

'The musical medium may never have learned notes, but has a native ear for melody, and loves to listen to sweet sounds. The inspired scribe, orator, or poet may have had no training whatever to fit him for the profession of literature or for the platform, yet there dwells within both the love of the art and an innate tendency to practise it. Mediumship stimulates latent powers, and calls into action dormant capabilities; but its possession does not alter the special type of character or trend of ability which naturally characterises the mediumistic person.'

WHAT THE MEDIUM CAN DO.

The aspirant for development should recognise the advisability, in order to facilitate the work of the spirits, before attending a séance, of making some personal preparation; such as seeking to eliminate from his mind all disturbing or irritating thoughts, and by striving to consciously realise unison of purpose with those who may have previously made their presence known or indicated their intention to help in the work of his development, by mentally requesting that the spiritual ties may be strengthened. Even where there has not been any clear indication of the presence of spirit helpers, a generally aspirational and receptive attitude of mind will do much towards providing favourable conditions.

It is unwise to persistently endeavour to force mediumship into activity; but when it expresses itself spontaneously, or when development follows upon temperate exercise, there can be no question that, rightly used, and within proper rational limits, it will prove helpful and educational to the medium

and of service to others; but should the exercise of mediumship occasion continued ill-health in its possessor, it is wisest and safest to abandon it temporarily if not entirely.

Too many people, instead of waiting until the spirits were ready to communicate with them, pressed for 'tests' before the connections were properly made; they complicated matters by their eager questionings, and worried the operators till everything went wrong, and then, because the answers were incorrect, inconsequent, misleading, or persistently negative, they declared that the spirit was a deceiver, evil or foolish, and, while having only themselves to blame, gave up the sittings in disgust, whereas, had they been less impetuous, less opinionated, less prejudiced they would in all probability have eventually obtained satisfactory proofs of the presence of their spirit loved ones.

PATIENCE REWARDED.

We wonder sometimes what those people would say who are disappointed because, after a few sittings, they have not blossomed out into developed mediums, if they had to sit night after night for six months without missing a sitting and without being rewarded by any sign or movement or external evidence, as Mr. and Mrs. Riley, of America, are reported to have done.

Although there was no outward or visible sign of the spiritual agency that was at work, this persevering couple, after waiting for six months, got their first fact—the table moved, and they knew that they had not moved it themselves. Evidently the spirits had not tried their patience for nothing, they had been busy forming the connections, for, from that time onwards, movements, messages, raps, writing, and finally marvellous materialisations followed in fairly quick succession.

THE LESSONS OF FAILURES.

It is unwise to expect that every séance will be successful, and sitters should not be disappointed if little or nothing

occurs. Sometimes a 'good failure' is as helpful and as educational as a 'grand success,' if the members of the circle are thoughtful and observant and endeavour to ascertain the causes of the *non*-success. The varying conditions of body and mind of the medium and sitters alike have much to do with the results, affecting as they do the health and moods of all concerned. Sometimes the sensitive feels buoyant and free. He realises that a strong influence is at work, and that he is open and responsive, and readily answers to the suggestions that are given to him from the other side; but on another occasion there may be a strange lack of life, and a heavy depressing feeling, a sense of isolation and of being empty and 'shut in' may overcloud him, and little or nothing of a spiritual or satisfactory nature transpire. Most mediums experience periods when they are 'out of power,' and seem to have lost touch with the other side. It may be that they have exhausted themselves by overstrain, their spirit friends may have withdrawn for a time, the sitters may be tired, unhappy, or angular, or some uncongenial spirits may be at work trying to affect the sensitive, or to obtain power to move the table. In any case sitters must be prepared to experience such variations and to accept them with philosophic cheerfulness. It is sometimes difficult to discriminate between results arising from the stimulated activity of the spirit self of the sensitive and those which are due to the operations of the ex-carnate operator; even the sensitive cannot at first tell how to distinguish between them, and only patience and experience will enable him to attain the ability to do so. In the meantime he must do his best.

HOW LONG WILL DEVELOPMENT TAKE?

It is impossible to estimate how long it will take to develop the sensitiveness of any given person to that degree of responsiveness to spirit influence that it may be regarded as 'reliable,' since so much depends upon the individual—upon his natural qualifications, so far as his susceptibility is

concerned, and his spiritual preparedness, as well as his willingness and perseverance. Then, too, a good circle of harmonious and intelligent sitters will materially assist in the process of his unfoldment, whereas a circle of impatient and selfish people will provide conditions that will retard the progress, if they do not injure the psychical conditions, of the unfortunate sensitive. The knowledge and power of the spirits who communicate and direct the circle will also have a strong determining influence upon the results, so that the novice who desires to succeed should decide to give time and attention to the study of the subject, and to experiment patiently and perseveringly—without haste and without anxiety or fear.

AN ESSENTIAL PRE-REQUISITE.

One of the most important pre-requisites for success in the development of mediumship along spiritual lines is the cultivation of the power of concentration. In the early days of the movement the would-be medium was advised to be 'passive,' and passivity was often construed into self-effacement. We are learning to distinguish between receptivity and docility, between apathy and aspiration. A medium is not, and should not be willing to become, a mere irresponsible tool. For intelligent and beneficial association with, and inspiration from, the people of the higher life, a certain degree of abstraction from one's outer surroundings is necessary. To cut one's self off from ordinary conditions, to retire into the sanctuary of one's own inner consciousness, to 'enter into the silence,' as it is sometimes called, is helpful training for the preparation of conditions favourable for the manifestation of spirit power. The Quakers were true Spiritualists in this sense, and evidently realised the need for the concentration of the soul's forces and their withdrawal from the outer plane, preparatory to the descent of the spiritual influence that moved them to speak. The sincere supplication for illumination and guidance is never in vain. The spirit breathes a serener air, and is calmed, strengthened,

and comforted by the consequent reaction. It is harmonised thereby, and thus becomes accordant to the psychic forces which, like the ocean's tides, ebb and flow throughout the universe, and bathe every soul that lies open to their vivifying and quickening influence. Still more, there are those who dwell in the Light, whose thoughts and love go out to all such as truly call upon God; and these, the ministering messenger spirits, often pour their libations of sympathy into the sad hearts of the sorrowful ones on earth, even though they remain unknown and their interposition is unrecognised by those to whom they have given their loving and helpful thoughts.

MEET THE SPIRITS HALF WAY.

By the earnest study of the conditions requisite for development of body, mind, and psychic sense, the intelligent medium will endeavour to meet the friends who inspire him at least half way on the Jacob's ladder of communion, and to enter into reciprocal and conscious fellowship with them on the thought plane, so that their inspirations may freely flow through his instrumentality to others, unobstructed by his personality. Classes for the development of mediumship along these lines are very much needed; classes in which the members are expected to take an active part, not merely to sit and sit, and let the spirits do all the work, but by systematic preparation and spiritual aspiration and cultivated receptivity prepare themselves to become lucid and capable instruments for the transmission of information and helpful influences from the other side.

There is but one course of procedure for the successful attainment of excellence in any field of labour or thought, and that is by study and training, by observation, by persevering application and determined effort, by readiness to learn and responsiveness to every influence which will help to smooth the pathway to the desired success. The intelligent medium who follows this course will not go blindly on groping in the

obscurity of the psychic realm and becoming the tool for unseen and unknown agents, but he will unfold his powers, and by co-operating with them will learn to know and trust his spirit preceptors, until he may possibly become as a spirit among spirits, the conscious possessor of such knowledge regarding his own spiritual nature and powers that he will be a ready instrument in the hands of enlightened spirit people, with whom he can knowingly work for human good.

CHAPTER II.

SPIRIT CIRCLES: HOW TO FORM AND CONDUCT THEM.

The spirit circle is a gathering of persons who desire to establish relations with the world of spirits, and receive communications therefrom. As such intercourse is a matter of fact—proved by oft-repeated experiment—it follows that the observance of those conditions which experience suggests will be the surest way of obtaining the desired results.—J. J. MORSE.

The mediumistic faculty in all its forms can be cultivated by sitting in the spirit-circle, which tends to perfect and spiritualise the magnetism of the sitters by their mutual action on each other and by the influence of the spirits.—MRS. EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN.

THE purpose for which the 'Spirit Circle' is held is that by the blending of the aura, psychic force, or magnetic emanations of the sitters, the attention of disembodied spirits may be attracted and a battery be formed by means of which they can communicate with the circle. The focalisation of this force rests with the unseen operators, and if they are skilled in the *modus operandi*, they know where, how, and in what way to use it to the best advantage.

Let us suppose that a number of persons determine to experiment and seat themselves around a table, place their hands on its surface, and engage in agreeable conversation. After a time, if the sitters provide the right conditions, it will be found that the table will begin to move. When the movements occur readily, one of the circle, acting as chairman, should ask that answers to questions may be given by the table signalling replies, tilting three times for affirmative, once for negative, twice for 'doubtful,' four for 'don't know,' five times for the 'alphabet' to be called over. This code of

signals is the one most frequently used, but any other will do as well. Answers to questions can generally be obtained, and messages, regarding matters of fact entirely unknown to the sitters, respecting deceased persons (who claim to be causing the tilts or rapping), are spelt out by this means, to be afterwards verified, so as to prove the identity of the person communicating.

How to Form the Circle.—The number in the circle should not be less than four nor more than twelve. An equal number of both sexes is preferable to a preponderance of either. The date of meeting should be fixed and unchanged, and every member should attend regularly. It is best, when practicable, to have a room set apart for the circle, and it should be comfortably warmed and seated and cheerfully lighted. The members should always occupy the same places round the table, except when requested by the spirits to make a change. The sensitive, or known medium, if one is present, should form part of this circle.

At the commencement joining hands (the right over the left) has advantages, but afterwards the hands can be placed on the table, palms downward. No one should be allowed in the room who does not sit in the circle. It should be constantly borne in mind that pure air and convenient seats, insuring ease and physical comfort, are helpful to success. Even more necessary is freedom from mental excitement and self-assertion. Innocent fun and sociability are good. The spirits are our friends—are human beings; they do not desire conventional solemnity, nor an artificial assumption of reverence and stained-glass attitudes of piety. But frivolity, curiosity, wonder, self-seeking, disputation, mercenariness, and pride are still more injurious. The great aim should be to be natural, kindly, appreciative, strong and sensible.

> 'How pure in heart and sound in head,
> With what divine affection bold
> Should be the man whose thought would hold
> An hour's communion with the dead.'

When to Sit.—The best time to sit is at that hour which is most convenient to all the sitters; when they are least likely to be disturbed, and when they can best give themselves up to the investigation.

How Often and how Long.—As a rule twice, or at the outside three times, a week is often enough to sit. Séances should not last much over an hour, certainly not longer than two hours.

The Requisite Conditions.—A round, three-legged, plain deal kitchen table is considered the best adapted for tilting or rapping, but almost any ordinary table will answer the purpose. Pleasant conversation will relieve the tedium and prevent strain while waiting for manifestations. Avoid controversial subjects and the extremes of seriousness and levity. Kindly thoughts and an aspirational frame of mind are conducive to good results. Stiffness, formality, and conventional exclusiveness are likely to prove fatal to success. Sincerity, sympathy and cheerfulness will go a long way towards making good conditions, and if mediumistic powers exist and spirits are present who desire to manifest, phenomena of some sort are likely to occur. We have known manifestations to take place at the first meeting of a circle, but sometimes the sitters have to wait for weeks or even months. Inharmonious feelings and discordant conditions will either prevent phenomena and react painfully upon any members of the circle who are sensitive, or they may attract spirits of an undesirable class. It is therefore better to suspend the séance, or break up the circle, than to continue to hold the sittings if the feelings of mutual confidence and good will are absent. When once the circle has been formed or phenomena have been obtained, no new sitters should be introduced unless permission is obtained from the spirits.

It is a good plan to sit in the same room, and wear the same garments as far as is convenient. Not that any special robe is necessary, but that, as the room and dress become impregnated with the psychic auras of the sitters, you may

have as nearly as possible the same conditions from time to time. For this reason a special room is often set apart as a 'séance room,' and used for no other purpose; there is less likelihood of mixed influences or turbulent manifestations under such conditions.

PUNCTUALITY.—Members of the circle should be punctual and keep their appointments with their spirit friends. Fancy keeping an angel waiting half an-hour when he comes to serve and bless you! Angels are 'messenger spirits.'

REGULARITY IN ATTENDANCE is very important, so that, as far as is possible, the same conditions may be provided on each occasion. The séance should be opened promptly to time, and late comers—if admitted at all—should take their seats as quietly as possible.

PRAYER AND SONG.—A few minutes of silent aspiration, of earnest soul-felt desire, should follow the singing of a hymn. If anyone is prompted, or feels the impulse from the other side, to utter a prayer, it should be done reverently, quietly, and briefly.

PASSIVITY IS ESSENTIAL, not the passivity of an unconscious log of wood, but the serene and calm passivity of one who is expectant without being anxious; who aspires without being demonstrative; who is receptive without being exacting or personally active. Not passive in the sense of yielding implicit and unquestioning obedience, but responsive to impulses, impressions, thoughts or suggestions that come to him in a reasonable and intelligible manner.

PATIENCE IS NECESSARY.—Time is required for growth: for the attuning of the two spheres and the blending of the thought-life of the spirit with that of the medium. Do not be impatient nor over zealous. Steady unfolding and ripening are best.

PERSEVERANCE IS INDISPENSABLE.—There will of necessity be difficulties to be overcome. Experiments will fail. Misconceptions will arise. Imperfect manifestations will occur. Conditions will vary. A variety of contingencies which

cannot be foreseen will have to be dealt with as they crop up. Do not be deterred nor downcast, but maintain a cheerful and expectant attitude. Do not demand. Spirits do not like to be commanded, neither should mediums or sitters submit to dictation. Persist, go cautiously, but do not falter. Avoid extremes; be neither despondent nor over-sanguine, but if confident of ultimate success and patiently determined to deserve it, the faith that is exercised will most certainly be rewarded. Not, perhaps, in the way the sitters or sensitive would most like or expect, but in *some* way good will be derived from the sincere search for truth and the desire for knowledge.

ONE CIRCLE ONE MEDIUM.—Judging from our observation and experience it is best that there should be a separate circle for each medium. It is very seldom indeed that the conditions of one circle meet the requirements of more than one sensitive for any great length of time; therefore it is best that a few friends should gather round a young medium and devote themselves to sitting with him for *his* development.

HOW LONG WILL DEVELOPMENT TAKE?—It is impossible to foretell how long it will take to unfold the powers of a medium so that he may be regarded as fairly well developed. Experience is needed both by spirit and medium to secure such results. But we may safely say that no medium is *fully* developed so long as his brain, body, and mind are capable of improvement. Development is therefore a life-long process to those who are progressive and teachable, but the first essential is a true purpose and sincere desire for spiritual good. Sympathy and harmony in the mental and psychical conditions of the sitters are also needed.

DIET AND DRINK.—Considerable importance is attached to diet by some people, and fasting is often recommended; but we find that if people live a rational, temperate, and cleanly life there is no need for fasting or special dieting, save under exceptional circumstances and for definite purposes—

such as the production of strong physical, or materialisation, or test phenomena, under rigid scientific conditions.

TRY THE SPIRITS.—All communications that purport to come from the other side should be received with reserve, and be tested by the ordinary rules and standards that we employ in our dealings with each other. We have to exercise our judgment and reason in daily life, and even then are not infrequently misled; and as there are so many difficulties attending the intercourse with excarnate human beings caution should be exercised in regard to accepting their statements or promises. There are many kindly, trustworthy, and wise spirits who communicate, but they cannot be known to be good and true until they have been tried and proved; therefore it is necessary to carefully and shrewdly 'try the spirits,' and not accept them as oracles or infallible authorities.

TRY THE SITTERS.—It is quite as necessary to try the sitters as it is to 'try the spirits,' but the trying in both cases should be accomplished with as much tact and discretion as possible, so as not to give pain or cause needless friction. There are some people who are so sensitive that they should not sit in circles, because they are liable to become charged with the psychic emanations from, and dominated by the expectancy of, the sitters, and are *not* influenced by spirits to any appreciable degree. Or probably, there are 'cross magnetisms'; members of the circle may be antagonistic to each other. Some sitters may be sarcastic, merely curious, or selfish, or mercenary, or not over clean, sober, or scrupulous, and all such surroundings act and re-act upon the highly sensitive organisation of the undeveloped medium, and, above all, provide conditions favourable for the manifestations of mischievous or malicious spirits, unless the medium is sufficiently developed, or is protected by wise spirits powerful enough to resist or control such influences. Like attracts like, as a general rule; but there are exceptions to this, as to most rules, as, for instance, where unfortunate or unhappy spirits are permitted to manifest, and are even

brought to the séance by other and more experienced spirit people so that they may be helped.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE SITTERS in moulding the conditions is too little realised. If they introduce an atmosphere of suspicion, doubt, distrust or detraction, they break the continuity of the flow of the psychic energy that has to be employed. By thus severing the current and dissipating the power, they mar the conditions essential to success; and, as all such disturbances of necessity centre upon and injuriously affect the sensitive medium, they render soul-satisfying and uplifting communion impossible. To all sitters we would say, 'You get, to a very great extent, what you make conditions for,' therefore open the doors of the heavens by love and purity.

CHANGES SOMETIMES BENEFICIAL.—A 'circle' may meet night after night without results, but if an additional sitter is added, who possesses the right temperament, phenomena may occur almost immediately. If the general psychic conditions of a circle of sitters are harmonious, although there may not be any specially mediumistic person present, interesting phenomena and successful communion may be enjoyed up to a certain stage. For instance, table tilting, or rappings, or both, may occur, but the spirits may not be able to produce other or more striking evidences of their ability to manipulate physical objects, not because they are unwilling, but because the energy that they require is not possessed by any one member, or by the circle as a whole. If a person of the right type of physical sensitiveness can be discovered and induced to join the circle, the more definite and striking phenomena may soon be forthcoming. The introduction of a new sitter may possibly have the effect of disturbing conditions and putting an end to the manifestations, or of affording conditions that will lead to new developments along other lines, such as entrancement, clairvoyance, and speaking mediumship.

When a good physical medium has been discovered, it is well for him if a few friends will devote themselves systematically to assist the spirits in his development.

'TEST' QUESTIONS CAN WAIT.—Should table movements occur, or raps be heard, let them go on for a little. Do not ask *test* questions. Request repetitions, ask for them to be clearer or louder, so that they shall be sharp and decisive. Ask for a certain number of movements or raps. Then you can proceed to ask questions as to whether the circle is sitting in the best arrangement for success. If changes are desired these should be made as suggested. It may happen that one or more of the sitters may be requested to change places or to withdraw from the table altogether. In the latter case the sitters should not take umbrage, or regard such rejection as a reflection upon them personally. It merely indicates that their psychical conditions do not blend with those of the rest of the circle. W. H. Bach says: 'If you are requested, either by the controlling intelligence or by the manager of the circle, to take another place, or even if your room is desired for some unknown cause, do not get angry and create a disturbance, but get with those with whom you are in spiritual harmony and try it again. All who have succeeded have passed through great trials and failures, and when success is attained, think of what you have gained! A knowledge of immortality, possibly, or you have assisted in producing an instrument through whom the proofs of immortality may be given.'*

PRELIMINARY ARRANGEMENTS.—When communication has been established by raps or table tilts, and some evidence has been afforded that the spirit possesses both the knowledge and the power to give effect to his wishes, definite instructions should be asked for as to who is the medium and the frequency of the 'sittings' necessary for development, and for the appointment of one among the sitters to act as 'conductor.' Confusion often results from several of the sitters asking conflicting questions at almost the same time, or, what is worse, making guesses or positive statements as to the identity or the wishes of the communicating intelligence.

* 'Mediumship and its Development.' Page 24.

THE FIRST REQUISITE IS TO SECURE FREE COMMUNICATION.—Instead of raps or table movements, the hands or heads of those sitters who can be influenced may be made to move a certain number of times in response to questions. Remember, the first requisite is to *establish the channel of communication;* and all personal questions as to who and what the spirit is should be reserved until the initial difficulties are overcome. It is most probable that at first the spirit operators will not be fully aware what effect is being produced by them, and the mind of the medium may be in a state of protest against being acted upon, and it is therefore extremely unwise to attempt to obtain responses to test questions or to secure evidences of the identity of the spirit under these imperfect conditions. Many mediums and inquirers have been deterred from further development or investigation because such questions have been prematurely put and the answers pressed for, with the result that confusing and contradictory responses were given, and the conclusion was hastily drawn that it was all fraud, delusion, or of the devil.

Writing in 'Light,' a correspondent who related some striking experiences observed: 'I now, in my anxiety, made a mistake which anxious inquirers sometimes make. I wanted more—I pressed for another test, forgetting the difficulties of mediumship, and the supreme effort which must have been made to give me what I had obtained. And this resulted in failure after remarkable tests had been given.'

Commenting upon this, another writer said: 'This is exactly how mediums are used; they give test after test, not to satisfy, but only to produce the desire for more. Then when the power is weakened comes the inability—or *fraud,* as imperfection in mediumship is too often called. This will be the case until they can have the only condition which is suitable for spiritual communion—passive trust and confidence. Real tests cannot come when sought with materialistic conditions. The true tests come unsought, unlooked for.'

A NECESSARY WARNING.—We cannot too often reiterate

the necessity of *observing the manifestations first* and drawing conclusions afterwards. A practice to be strongly deplored, and one that arises from the laudable desire to aid the spirit before the medium is under full control, is the common one of putting words into the mouth of the medium, or 'reading' into the message what the *sitter* thinks was intended. It is extremely difficult for the spirit to alter the impression thus made should he be desirous of so doing, as it is naturally easier to make the first impression upon the mind of the sensitive than it is to remove an erroneous one and put another in its place. Do not pester the medium who is being influenced with questions and suggestions; but quietly and sympathetically await results.

Even though the process be slow and tedious, and the waiting long until the full message can be given (with the then means at command), yet, if it is at last *clearly* given from the spirit side, a decided step forward will have been taken, and in all probability subsequent messages will come much more easily, the channel of communication being so far opened. So many difficulties are encountered both on this side and the other (and even when the channel *is* cleared it needs to be *kept* open), that unless the spirit possesses positive knowledge and power, one need not be surprised if there are frequent 'breakdowns' and many disappointments and perplexities to be encountered and overcome in making the preliminary experiments. But having reached the stage of clear communication, and having received definite instructions as to conditions to be observed, the sitters and the medium alike should endeavour to faithfully co-operate with the spirit workers.

Spirits the Operators.—As the spirits are to be the operators, if the sitters and the medium can obtain from them intimations of what they wish to try to do, and instructions as to what can be done by the circle to assist them to achieve the desired end, it is manifest that it will be wise to consult their wishes, and, as far as possible, within reasonable limits,

conform to their suggestions. It should, however, be borne in mind that they should be consulted, not 'with bated breath and whispering humbleness,' but in a rational and friendly way, for the purpose of securing their intelligent co-operation and obtaining their advice.

Let Reason Rule Reasonably.—It may happen that the 'conditions' asked for by the communicating intelligences may seem to be ludicrous or impracticable; should this be so representations to that effect should be made to the spirit, and if such instructions are persisted in, except where, through long association, confidence is felt in the spirit, or very clear evidence of knowledge has been manifested, the medium and sitters, exercising their own reasoning powers, should quietly and firmly decline to do what is asked of them, and some other course should be suggested. We do *not* advise either medium or sitters to blindly accept or follow what is given to or through them; reason should ever reign; but even reason will show that in experimental work it is sometimes advisable to tentatively adopt and follow some course that may not, at first sight, appear quite reasonable.

Personal Messages.—We will suppose that a satisfactory arrangement of the sitters has been secured, and that table movements or raps of a clear and decisive character have been obtained. Questions may now be put to ascertain whether the spirit is related to any person present, and if so, to whom, and the nature of the relationship; or with whom the spirit wishes to be in communication. The person indicated should then question his friend for himself; and should secrecy be desired, and the spirit express readiness to answer mental questions, the questions can be put mentally, and they will be answered as if they had been spoken aloud. Each question should be put clearly, so that a simple answer can be given. But if the spirit agrees to move the table as the alphabet is called over, more detailed information can be obtained, and it may be left to spell out its name, its relationship to one or more of the sitters, and its message. The

spirit should be addressed courteously; a kindly visitant from the other world is no ordinary guest, especially if he is a loving friend who desires to give you comfort.

CLEAR THINKING NEEDED.—While answers to mental questions are frequently given with startling accuracy and success, spirit people usually require that questions or wishes should be orally expressed; and the objection is urged by some people that if the spirits can see our thoughts they ought to know what we require. The fact is, however, that many people do not have clear thoughts or hold them definitely in mind long enough to be read, and many sitters actually require to express themselves in words before others, whether in the body or out of it, can understand what they mean or wish to know.

Alluding to the expression which is frequently heard, 'If I could only speak as well as I can think, I should have little difficulty in saying what I want,' a thoughtful writer has pointed out that this is largely a mistake, for if the thought *was* definite and clear, in words, there would be no difficulty in giving it utterance, and he claims that many people speak incoherently because they think inconsequentially.

CAUSES OF CONFUSION.—It is possible that a sensitive who is easily impressed and who readily perceives what the spirit people wish to accomplish, may forestall them by prematurely expressing part of their thought himself, or even performing a similar action to that which they intend to produce, carried away, as it were, by his anxious desire for success; and yet the sensitive, being hypnotised by their dominant wish or purpose, will be unconscious that he has unwittingly helped on the manifestations instead of letting the spirits do their own work. For instance, a table may be tilted somewhat unevenly and with difficulty in response to questions; one of the sitters, who is sensitive to the wishes of others, 'senses' the desire of the spirits who are seeking to communicate, and in response to that psychic 'suggestion'—unintentionally transferred by them—unconsciously to himself exerts pressure to help the table

to move in unison with what *he* thinks or feels that the spirit people want to say; yet such a sensitive would be naturally indignant should he be charged with causing the tilts.

Persons who are easily affected sometimes act in this way in response to the dominant idea of the sitters, and considerable confusion ensues. Unless care is exercised to watch oneself such a tendency may be unconsciously yielded to; hence there has been some basis for the theory of unconscious muscular action due to expectancy—or a dominant idea. It is wise, therefore, when the communication purports to be for any particular member of the circle, for that sitter to let his hands slide over the surface of the table as it moves, and to note that he does not in any way accelerate or retard the movements.

THE REAL POINT TO BE OBSERVED.—It is, however, not so much the fact that the table moves, with or without contact, that is of paramount importance, but that by its means intercourse can be obtained and maintained with so-called dead people; and evidences of spirit identity, as well as loving and cheering messages, can be obtained in that way from loved ones who were supposed to be gone for ever. This is the important point to be established beyond all peradventure.

CHAPTER III.

HOW 'CONDITIONS' AFFECT RESULTS.

'There are three factors concerned in mediumship: the spirit controlling, the mental atmosphere of the medium controlled, and the mental atmosphere of the people constituting the company surrounding the medium.'—J. J. MORSE.

'The requirements for honesty on the part of mediums are equally binding upon investigators; they must have honesty of purpose if they expect to attract honest spirits.'—A. MORTON.

FAILURE MAY BE CAUSED BY THE SITTERS.—Although the spirits may be intensely anxious to demonstrate their power, they are sometimes repelled from those whom they seek to approach by the 'bristling' and discordant conditions of mind that prevail among the sitters, who disperse with a feeling of dissatisfaction and disappointment. If the sitters only knew it, the 'failure' was directly traceable to the destructive thought-atmosphere with which they surrounded themselves and the medium. Too frequently they do not prepare themselves for the 'hour's communion with the dead,' and their mental attitude is anything but conducive to success. They do not put away the thronging thoughts, anxieties, and worries of their busy lives, but carry them right into the séance chamber, yet expect good spiritual results. Both sitter and medium may very easily destroy the indispensable conditions of spirit-manifestation, and the medium's honesty, not his want of growth, or of knowledge, is called in question by the investigator who knows, and perhaps cares, nothing for the occult laws he has violated, not obeyed.

MEDIUMS OFTEN MAR THE MANIFESTATIONS.—Great difficulties are frequently encountered by sitters and spirits because of the mental barriers which the mediums erect by their objections, hesitations, and oppositions. As one is removed or overthrown, another speedily fills the place. For instance, a spirit may seek to communicate by impressing certain words on the brain of the medium and by striving to manipulate his vocal organs, so that clear expression shall be given to them. Two or three words may be uttered, but the mind of the medium, which had been passive, becomes active and takes fright, especially if what is said appears to be of a 'test' or evidential nature. He wonders if it is *true*. He *fears* that a mistake may be made, and hesitates; and thus, by interfering with the free course of the utterance, causes the very result which he dreads. It is one thing to cause thoughts to flow through a clear channel or over a calm surface, and quite another to overcome resistance and produce the same effect.

SPIRITS HAVE MANY DIFFICULTIES TO OVERCOME.—On one occasion, a medium felt the influence of an arisen friend very strongly. It was accompanied by an intense *desire* to speak, and yet the medium was unable to give utterance to that which the spirit wished to have said. In answer to an inquiry that was subsequently made as to why the spirit had been unable to communicate with his dear ones, one of the familiar controls of the medium explained that he thought he *had* spoken. His feeling of nearness to them was so vivid, and his wish to express himself through the lips of the medium had been so intense, that it was only after he had ceased his efforts to control that he realised he had only *thought* and *intended*, but had not succeeded in compelling the sensitive to utter his message. This will perhaps explain why mediums sometimes rise to their feet and act as if they were about to speak, but get no further—they do not receive the impression, or the right mental impulse; they feel as if they *could* speak and yet they have nothing to say. At such times

a few words of sympathy and inquiry from the conductor of the circle may assist the control to realise the situation and succeed in his endeavours to communicate. Even on this side, when we send telegraphic messages or use the telephone, mistakes and misunderstandings are by no means uncommon occurrences, and our letters sometimes create an impression in the mind of the reader which we did not intend to convey. Is it any wonder, then, that messages from the other side are imperfectly impressed upon, and incorrectly rendered by, the medium? Most persons who have attempted to transfer thoughts to sensitives have realised that general ideas can be transmitted and expressed much more easily than names, dates, or specific words can be impressed upon or expressed by the subject. The wonder is, not that so *few* names, ages, and special details are given by spirits to and through mediums, but that, considering all the attendant circumstances, so *many* 'test' messages are continually being given, both privately and in public.

THE 'SAVING SENSE OF HUMOUR.'—We have heard people denounce the triviality, the fun and frivolity of the séance-room, and to a certain extent we agree with them; but there is danger, too, in the other extreme of deadly dulness, of decorous propriety, and of philosophic 'superiority.' Spirits are 'human still,' and a good breezy laugh, a hearty, joyous, kindly, sympathetic disposition, goes a long way to open the avenues by which they can approach us. Mr. Henry Forbes well and truly says: 'Experience has taught that the spiritual circle should be presided over by a "pure heart" and a "strong head"—to which qualities might be added a well-ordered development of the sense of humour, for the absence of humour often tends to make philosophy grotesquely ill-proportioned.'

BE NATURAL, CALM, AND CHEERFUL.—Mr. T. Everitt suggests that the sitters should be *natural* and easy; that pleasant sociability, agreeable, even humorous conversation will be helpful; that the sitters should breathe in unison, and

take good deep breaths for the purpose of setting up rhythmic vibrations and liberating the forces which are requisite for the production of physical phenomena. Singing is often useful for this purpose, but it should be melodious. 'It isn't *noise* I want,' said a spirit once, 'it's *harmony*. If you cannot sing you can count out loud, and count all together; *that* may give us the right vibrations.'

It should be borne in mind that feelings of demand, of selfish, personal claim to the exclusion of others, will exert a detrimental influence upon the conditions of the circle and the medium. Such a mental sphere will necessarily affect the sensitive and rub him the wrong way.

Impatience and Anxiety are disintegrating mental conditions. People who are all the time looking at their watches and thinking, 'Oh! I wish they would hurry up.' 'Oh! do be quick, don't keep us here all night, we shall surely miss our train,' &c., are 'disturbers of the peace,' and break the conditions which require harmony and repose. 'We have found out that we cannot hurry them,' said a lady who had enjoyed much experience in circles; and consequently, when you are sitting for difficult phenomena, you need to have plenty of time, and be prepared to sit good humouredly for hours, if need be, to see it through, and then results are likely to speedily ensue; whereas the more you try to hurry, the more anxious you become, the less likelihood is there that you will secure results at all. You can surely realise that hurry, impatience, anxiety, intense expectancy, fear and suspicion, must of necessity disturb the conditions and prove inimical to the efforts of the spirit operators to present clear and convincing phenomenal demonstrations of their power and identity.

Harmony absolutely Essential to Success.—When sitting in circle for phenomenal manifestations, harmony should be the primary consideration. To secure this result, the sitters must be willing to co-operate in a friendly spirit, and abandon, for the time being at least, all exclusiveness,

and break down the attitude of reserve which is so frequently assumed between strangers. On one occasion in particular we had a remarkable illustration of the detrimental influence of one or two sitters. It occurred in a séance at which a number of mediums were present, and, under ordinary circumstances, successful results would have been practically certain; but this was *not* an ordinary séance—at least, not in the opinion of one lady who apparently imagined that she had been invited to discover fraud, and that the rest of us were suspicious characters. Up to the moment of her appearance in the circle we were a happy family of sociable folk, and enjoyed a very pleasant season of conversational interchange. When, however, the said lady, accompanied by a friend, joined the company, there was a silence that could be felt. The social temperature fell rapidly—people visibly stiffened and became constrained. The two ladies appeared to feel afraid to speak lest they should say anything that might be used by the mediums, and spoke in monosyllables. Sitting bolt upright, grim and silent, they drew up to the table, and when the phenomena began displayed no signs of interest. Their 'detective' attitude was so objectionable that even those who had endeavoured to thaw these self-constituted Sherlock Holmeses, gave up the attempt, and, in consequence, what had promised to be a really enjoyable evening, proved one of the most uncomfortable it has been our lot to experience.

How Not to Do It.—On another occasion, when some experiments were being made by a medium, under control, in the direction of psychometry and clairvoyance, a lady expressed a desire to be the 'subject' for delineation. After one or two efforts the medium exclaimed, 'I am very sorry, but for some reason I am quite unable to get anything from you, or for you.' Shortly afterwards the lady in question remarked to one of the sitters, 'I knew he would not be able to give me anything. That is the third medium I have "knocked out."' The failure to obtain results under such impossible conditions is a proof of the genuine psychic nature

of the powers of the mediums. If they were pretenders they would succeed in doing something under any circumstances and in spite of such adverse psychic conditions.

A VARIETY OF CONSIDERATIONS.—It would be unwise for us to attempt to give cut and dried instructions regarding the development of mediumship, because, beyond trying to offer harmonious conditions, the would-be medium can at first do so little. He is not usually an active agent, but is an intermediary between earth and the spirit world. The spirits who seek to use him as their instrument may or may not be fit for that work. It is not every spirit who *can* develop a medium. Some of them lack both knowledge and aptitude. Others may have the knowledge and yet fail from want of the power to control. They may be able to affect one sitter and not another; to use a sensitive for one phase of mediumship, and yet be unable to succeed in any other direction. A spirit may be in such conditions that he can produce good physical phenomena; he may, however, try to do so through a 'subject' who is fitted for trance or clairvoyant mediumship and does not possess the quality of psychic force for sensuous manifestations. A medium who is naturally qualified for physical demonstrations may persist in desiring trance or inspirational mediumship, and be determined to become a speaker or nothing. Frequently at the outset both spirits and sitters are ignorant of their powers, of the conditions necessary for success, and the association that exists between them being affectional rather than intellectual or spiritual, they have to grope their way towards each other. It follows, therefore, that experiments have to be made on *both* sides. Sitters and young mediums often spoil the séances by over-anxiety. There would not be half so much heard about 'evil spirits' (so-called) if more regard were paid to the necessity of maintaining a calm, patient, and serene frame of mind. Some people become excited as soon as phenomena commence; mediums not infrequently get nervous or timid when they feel that they are being affected, and, although they desire to

be controlled, are *afraid* to submit to the influence when they are likely to lose consciousness. All these are disturbing elements, and naturally interfere with the flow of the forces that are to be utilised and prevent the success that is desired.

A spirit without any very definite purpose, finding himself in the presence of a mediumistic person, may seek to influence him, and spasmodic actions may result. Unless the 'control' should soon give evidence of clear thought and definite purpose he should be requested, in a kindly and courteous manner, to seek the assistance of some spirit who understands the methods to be employed, and induce him to exert his power for the benefit of the medium and the circle.

An Open Mind Necessary.—One of the first and most elementary conditions for spirit intercourse is this: Sitters and mediums alike should endeavour to avoid prejudging the case, and be as responsive and open-minded as possible. Positive expectations should not be entertained, or strong claims made. But in the careful scientific spirit the sitters should await results and be determined to hold their judgment in suspense—to watch and wait; and after careful observation and a number of experiments, conducted in a sympathetic but unbiassed, non-committal frame of mind, let the facts themselves speak.

Avoid Theories but Gather Facts.—If an inquirer has formed, or adopted, the theory that it is all the mind of the medium, or the dominating thought of the sitter (that the table or the medium only gives back the thoughts of the most positive mind in the circle), it will be better for him as far as possible to hold back that thought, and watch, because if he tries to control the table movements by the exercise of his will upon it, he merely interferes with the efforts which the spirits may be making. If he actually succeeds in causing the movements to occur as he *wills* that they shall, he does not prove that spirits cannot do the same thing. He may possibly switch them off and himself on, but in that case the

machine will simply respond to his thought and not theirs. That is all.

THE CRUCIAL QUESTION.—What sincere truthseekers, whether mediumistic or not, need to know is this: 'Can spirits gain power to move the table, to make raps, to give us messages which will prove their existence and identity?' If they set out to obtain proof of the presence and power of spirits, they must give them the opportunity to satisfy them with evidence.

Instead of interfering with the conditions and destroying the connections, and then triumphantly asserting, 'there are no spirits in it, I moved the table by my will, it only moved in harmony with my thoughts,' the inquirer should preserve a calm, observant mood. He should have, as Sir William Crookes said, 'a mind to let,' and render assistance as far as possible by observing the conditions and seeking for proofs of spirit action; then, when the operators are ready to give them, ask for tests of identity.

IMPRESSIONS.—Mrs. Britten says: '"Impressions" are the voices of spirits or the monitions of the spirit within us, and should always be followed out, unless suggestive of wrong in act or word,' and she advises that 'if a strong impression to write, speak, sing, dance or gesticulate possesses any person present in a circle, it should be faithfully obeyed. It has a meaning even if it cannot at first be realised.' Of course, care and discretion must be exercised; but in the private or home circle greater freedom is possible than would be judicious in a public gathering.

IMPERSONATIONS.—One of the most interesting and individually satisfactory mode of spirit manifestation is that known as 'impersonating test mediumship.' Most mediums at some stage of their career are employed in this direction, and some of them devote their whole time to it and place themselves at the service of inquirers who desire to get into communication with their departed relatives and friends. Mr. F. W. H. Myers was compelled to concede the fact of the

inadequacy of his 'telepathic' and 'subliminal consciousness' theories to account for the evidences of the identity and independent consciousness of his spirit friends who controlled Mrs. Thompson and spoke to him through her instrumentality, recalling to his recollection incidents in their mutual past experiences in such a conclusive fashion that he thankfully acknowledged his indebtedness to the medium and his gratitude to the spirits.

WHY A 'MEDIUM' IS NEEDED.—Because an individual has passed through the death-change he is not instantly endowed with the knowledge and power to use the aura given off by a sensitive for the purpose of communicating with his earth friends. It is often a source of perplexity and pain to the spirit who has just left the body that, although he speaks to those who are mourning because of his 'death,' they do not hear; though he touches them, they do not respond; though he would convey to them the truth that he is 'living,' they only weep and grieve, and he is compelled to turn sadly away as the conviction is forced upon him that a barrier which he cannot overcome intervenes between them. But although direct communication could not be established, they may feel strangely comforted as the effect of this influence, and leave his mortal form with the thought 'he is not there, he is relieved from pain,' or the more familiar one, 'he is better off'!

Inquirers sometimes ask, 'Why must my dearest and most intimate friend approach me through the mediumship of a stranger, instead of coming directly to me?' Suppose that friend does endeavour to reach the inquirer, but is unable to impress him: suppose the spirit tries to 'suggest' telepathically to his friend that he is near to him, and fails; what can he do but seek out some one through whom he is able to manifest because he is more psychically 'open' and responsive, or else leave him altogether without evidence? 'The medium,' says Mr. W. J. Colville, 'is *par excellence* a sensitive individual, whose sensitiveness makes him aware of

presences undetectable by those of less highly strung organisation. Your friend comes to you, but if you cannot discern his presence, and one more sensitive than yourself is able to do so, it clearly follows that that other's mediumship has served simply as a means of revealing to you what your own blunter perceptions failed to discern.'

LIFE AFTER DEATH REAL AND HUMAN.—The fact that the life beyond death is one where law reigns supreme, and where ignorance and wrong-doing affect the status of the departed, holding them in the conditions of spiritual darkness and limiting their liberties—while knowledge, purity, and loving-kindness are necessary to the spirit's progress and well-being—is constantly enforced from the other side, and Spiritualism has shown us the *real* life beyond the tomb, not the stained glass personalities nor the mythical conditions of the orthodox sectarian, but the natural and human beings who have persisted. It has banished misconception and miracle by giving us glimpses of the facts and the reign of law in the spiritual world. The law of continuity, of consequences, is as inexorable on the spiritual as upon the physical plane, and that which is written *is* written and cannot be effaced. No magic or incantation can suddenly transform the dying John Jones into the saintly soul who is fit for the celestial heights and the companionship of the wisest angels.

The revelation of the simply human life of the departed, of the persistence of character, of the maintenance of individuality—with its shortcomings, prejudices, limitations, and personal characteristics, as well as the preservation of all the wealth of intellect and the treasures of soul resulting from life's toil, study, and unfolding—this revelation is, to our thinking, the greatest blessing which Spiritualism has conferred upon humanity. If it did no more than awaken within us a divine discontent with the pettiness of the majority of our thoughts, feelings, and troubles, it would be of great service to the world; and those who deplore the trivialities are unconsciously condemning the small and narrow conditions

of the daily life of the average mortal—because, such as we are here so shall we be over there until we can grow to appreciate the fuller spiritual life, to realise our ideals by application to the task of development, and to recognise that beauty comes by use. But Spiritualism does infinitely more than this; it demonstrates the 'going on' of human beings, the preservation of identity, and the orderly continuance—the sequential character—of life. It dignifies this present stage of expression. It gives an added incentive to effort, a new grace to affection, and an increased lustre to goodness and worth.

MANY METHODS, BUT ONE OBJECT.—The modes of spirit manifestation are many, the phases wonderfully varied, but, like a golden cord running through them all, there is the distinct purpose of bringing to those on earth the glad tidings and proof positive of continued conscious personal existence in the life after death. Usually speaking, the process of development is slow, and the medium will be likely to grow disheartened; but by looking back over the ground already traversed, and by comparing the faint efforts made at the commencement with the later and fuller indications of spirit power, he should feel encouraged, and proceed with renewed vigour.

MEDIUMS MUST PARTICIPATE IN THEIR OWN UNFOLDMENT.—Some mediums take little or no interest in their own mediumship, they are often reckless as to conditions and disregardful of the lesson that their experience should teach them as to the influence that their sitters exert upon them; they will sit, when pressed, to oblige so-called friends, even when to do so is injurious because they are already exhausted. Importunate acquaintances, mere sightseers and wonder-mongers, prevail over them because they have cultivated the 'negative' frame of mind and 'leave it all to the spirits,' and they suffer in consequence of their folly, indifference, apathy, and want of personal cultivation of will ability to govern themselves. If mediums do not exercise self-respect they

cannot expect to win the respect of intelligent people in or out of the body. It largely rests with themselves whether their gifts shall lead to spiritual graces and an unfolded selfhood.

As Dr. Dean Clarke very truly says: 'Novices in mediumship have no business to assume obligations they are not fully qualified to fulfil. Let them take the counsel given metaphorically to the disciples of Jesus, to "tarry in Jerusalem till their beards are grown." They, surely, should wait till the spirits are strong enough to control and *shield* them from the meddlesome interference of ignorant people, both in the flesh and out.'

We strongly urge all mediums to wait and serve their apprenticeship thoroughly before they undertake to sit for sceptics or perform public work, either as 'test,' 'impersonating,' 'speaking,' 'seeing,' or 'healing' mediums, and the best place to secure the necessary experience, training, and unfolding is in the private home circle. After a certain stage has been reached, however, the medium who has been used for impersonations will in all probability begin to display the powers of clairvoyance and to receive vivid impressions. Then will come, or they will be accompanied by, the efforts of the spirits to pass beyond the purely personal and limited forms of expression associated with the affectionate messages and greetings, to the consideration and explanation of the conditions and experiences of life on the other side. Spirits who can teach and give more sequential and sustained addresses will in all likelihood assume control, and under such conditions it will be found necessary to enlarge the circle and introduce fresh sitters. The clairvoyant and psychometrist needs new subjects with whom to experiment, and the speaking medium requires an audience to listen to his discourses, so that the next step beyond the small private circle may well be a semi-public one, or an 'after-circle' such as is frequently held at the close of the public Sunday services in many towns, at which mediums who have reached this stage are afforded the opportunites they need.

THE HOLY OF HOLIES OF SPIRITUALISM.—Around the family table, where those who are united in affection meet to hold joyous communion with their spirit friends, where the blended desire ascends to the spiritual plane and becomes the potent magnetic attraction by which those friends can establish harmonious relations with the sitters—in such a circle and under such conditions even a weak degree of mediumistic responsiveness to the outpouring from the spirit side will become intensified and exalted, until rhythmic vibrations are established and thought and emotion will readily pass from one to the other, and *all* will be attuned. The best method of cultivation is to regard the mediumistic sensitiveness as a natural and desirable quality, to be evolved by training and experiment, under the direction of the reason and the conscience. In this manner the tribunal which decides the conduct of life is ever present, and no matter what influences are brought to bear upon the sensitive he remains steadfast, realising that the responsibility for use or abuse rests with himself.

CHAPTER IV.

PRACTICAL ADVICE TO SENSITIVES.

No spirit can control a medium against his will and inclination, if he understands the supreme power of his own selfhood.—HUDSON TUTTLE.

We consider the highest degree of physical health perfectly compatible with the very best manifestation of mediumship.—J. J. MORSE.

The law of sympathy governs all spiritual relationships, and, as we are all spirits here and now, although encased in earthly habiliments, we may come into sympathetic *rapport* with others and be affected by, or influence them, for good or ill.—B. G. E.

WHEN an inquirer says, 'I have been frequently assured by mediums that I am mediumistic and should become a successful medium, but I am at a loss to know how to proceed; will you advise me what to do to become developed?' we feel inclined to reply: If you are animated by a sincere desire to be of service to others, and not by personal ambition or mercenary motives, you are in the right mood to enter upon the work. If you are endowed with the requisite temperamental and organic conditions, the discipline of experience will teach you many things, and the spirits will help you if you are aspiring. Do not, however, expect immediate results. Mediumship, unlike mushrooms, cannot be *forced*, and any attempt in that direction is likely to be followed by injurious results.

NO 'SECRET' FOR SALE.

There is no great 'occult secret' that we can impart to you. No one can sell you the knowledge of how to become a medium within a specified and limited time, or develop you by a set of 'lessons.' It is, in all cases, a matter of time, and

frequently of painstaking and long-continued investigation, of experimental research, of steady training; and therefore time and patience are absolutely necessary. You will require to be observant, cool, rational, persistent, and affirmative, remembering that 'it is dogged perseverance that does it.'

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MEDIUMSHIP.

Before you undertake to sit for development we should advise you to read the best books you can procure, so that you may have a good general knowledge of, and profit by, the experience and advice of others, and be prepared for the trials and disappointments that you will in all probability have to meet. Further, we would remind you that while mediumship has its privileges and delights, it also has its duties and responsibilities; its 'cross' as well as its 'crown.' You should consider whether you are prepared to face the difficulties; to work and wait; to persevere in spite of odium and ostracism on this side and the possible attacks of the 'dwellers on the threshold' on the other; whether you will suffer and be strong, and consecrate your energies in an altruistic spirit to the Cause of Truth and Progress in the service of enlightened spirits for the good of Humanity. If you are ready to do this and endure, we wish you God-speed and the wise guidance of true and kindly spirit teachers, and we trust that you will find our advice of service to you in your studies.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

If you have had any reason to suppose that you are mediumistic and can devote sufficient time and thought to the subject without unduly interfering with your present occupation, and decide to try to develop your powers, you will do well to study carefully the preceding chapter on 'Circle-holding,' and then, if possible, obtain the assistance of several good and sympathetic friends and form a circle as nearly as possible on the lines mentioned there. If you can secure the help of someone who has had experience, especi-

ally if he is 'impressional' and can realise what the spirits desire to accomplish, you will be fortunate, as he, by his sympathy and advice, will be able to guide you and facilitate the work.

Cultivate and give expression to an aspirational frame of mind. If you *really* want anything you generally ask for it and try to get it. Why not pray, then? Or, in other words, petition your spirit friends to help you? Why not send out longing desires to the Source of all Power, so that you may relate yourself harmoniously to the great stream of psychic potency which flows all around and through you, and, by becoming attuned, realise its existence and strength?

CAUTION AND RESTRAINT NEEDED.

On some occasions you will probably feel stimulated and so 'stirred up' that you will be inclined to continue the sitting beyond the limits which are healthful and wise. After a time, in a prolonged séance, most mediums experience a perceptible change, and weakening, in the tone or quality of the conditions, frequently accompanied by a feeling of chilliness and weariness. If such sensations affect you, regard them as a warning that the séance has lasted as long as is good for you, and close it as soon as you are able. The spirits are generally good-natured and willing to do all they can, and unless you protect yourself they may unduly prolong the sitting without realising the injury they are inflicting upon you. Experienced spirits protect their mediums by taking control of this matter and ordering a cessation when *they* consider it wise and necessary, but until you have friends who will guard you in this way you must protect yourself.

ABUSE, NOT USE, DANGEROUS.

Never forget that your nervo-vital energy is used and expended in the exercise of your mediumship, and that the supply is limited, hence the necessity for care and moderation. Too frequent, prolonged, or discordant séances; inharmonious

conditions and sittings, when already jaded and exhausted, are therefore to be avoided. If you make excessive demands upon your energies, nervous prostration and derangements are an almost inevitable consequence. It is not the *use* of mediumship but its *abuse* that is dangerous—perversion and excess are as injurious in this direction as they are in others, whereas temperate and healthful exercises are strengthening and exhilarating. If you feel 'run down,' decline to sit. If you feel that the circle is inharmonious, or that the sitters are depleted and exacting, refuse to sit.

If you find that you are tired, and feel weary and debilitated on the day following your séances, you may be sure that you are sitting too long or that you require the help of a larger circle of congenial friends to supply the requisite psychic force for your further development. 'Mediumship,' says Mr. J. J. Morse in his 'Practical Occultism,' 'occasionally acts in such a manner that it becomes a stimulant to every organ and function of the system, and the individual becomes excited, nervous, and irritable; hence, the greater the acceleration of physiological functions as the result of psychical influences upon the human body, the more need of caution and restraint in every department of physiological life.'

Be very chary about allowing anyone to 'magnetise' you 'to aid your development,' or 'to give you strength,' as they sometimes put it. Because you are a medium you are naturally susceptible and negative, especially so while you are in the circle, and you absorb a great deal of what is thrown upon you. If you permit people of whom you know little or nothing to exert their influence over you, it is possible that very painful results will ensue. You may become involved in all sorts of mental and passional spheres, and be liable to the intrusion of spirits who will produce discord and perhaps cause you a great deal of trouble. If you desire the best results you must institute the highest and most harmonious conditions. Let your séances be held in the light, in well-

ventilated rooms. Only under the very best and happiest conditions, with personal friends and in private séances, should you be prevailed upon to sit in darkness. There is, however, no need to sit in the full glare of day or the blaze of strong lights—the 'dim religious light' (or a red shaded light) will be sufficient, and it is conducive to restfulness and receptivity.

AVOID EXTREMES.

Do not get excited or carried away by enthusiasm. Do not 'give yourself away,' but maintain rational self-control. Remember that manhood and character are of greater value than mediumship. Do not entertain the idea that you are so extremely sensitive that you are justified in being brusque, peculiar, odd, or rude. There is not the slightest reason why you should be angular, inconsiderate for others, or easily offended; neither should you cultivate singularity in your personal appearance or render yourself conspicuous in your dress or adornments. Do not urge that you 'take on the conditions of people,' and therefore cannot shake hands with them, or that some people 'rob you of your psychic force like vampires, and irritate and weaken you.' The cultivation of your psychical nature should include the knowledge of how to resist all such influences and how to throw off the conditions that you absorb from your sitters. It is not necessary that you should be spasmodic, effeminate or incoherent; all such affectations are unworthy and bring mediumship into contempt. It may be, and doubtless is true, that to a certain extent mediums do reflect their surroundings and are liable to be dominated by people both in and out of the body; but that fact should be a warning to you to be on your guard and to protect yourself, when not actually sitting in the séance, from becoming an echo of others, or a mere weather-vane to show which way the psychic winds are blowing. If you are not robust enough, if you have not sufficient knowledge and self-mastery to use your will and maintain control over your psychic self; if you are unable to guard against the adverse

emanations or the 'drawing' powers of others, you had better take lessons in concentration and psychic self-protection ; and, until you understand the art of self-possession, refrain from attempting to cultivate your sensitiveness. It will never do for you to be 'too sensitive' to be natural, sensible, and strong.

FITNESS THE TRUE TEST.

It is a mistake for a young medium to wish to be something of everything and become envious because others succeed in obtaining manifestations that will not occur in his presence or through his instrumentality. We advise you, therefore, to be ambitious in a rightful way, and strive to give the conditions necessary to get the best and the highest results within the scope of your powers ; but you will dissipate your forces and weaken your influence for good if you are discontented, jealous of others, and try to outdo them, or to obtain phenomena in phases of mediumship which are not natural to you. There are certain phases of mediumship which interblend and can be combined with good results, but we wish you to guard against the disposition to be something of everything—and end by being nothing in particular. Find out what your natural capabilities are, and seek to unfold them—other powers may afterwards develop as the result of the sensitiveness that has been thus evolved.

SPIRITS NOT INFALLIBLE.

The instructions that your spirit friends will give you, when they get you well in hand, as a general rule may safely be followed, but at first you will probably find it difficult to get clear guidance from them. You must therefore keep a level head and go along very cautiously. Never let any spirit, in or out of the body, usurp your right of private judgment or exercise undue authority over you. Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty: you must use your own discretion and try the spirits before you trust to them.

The prevailing idea that a spirit will know everything and

be able to work miracles, merely because he is a spirit, has been a fruitful cause of mistakes, and has frequently led to much trouble. You should always bear in mind that a spirit is a human being; not of necessity better nor worse than yourself.

When you remember that all sorts and conditions of people pass into spirit life, who are not transformed by death but continue, for a time at least, to be much the same sort of people that they were here, you will realise the unwisdom of indiscriminate self-surrender and the danger of implicit reliance upon, and unquestioning obedience to, the spirits who may seek to use you as their agent. It is advisable to talk to and reason with the spirits as you would with people here.

In a 'developing circle' many things can be tolerated, because both sides are experimenting and 'feeling their way towards each other,' and it is difficult at first to know just what *is* necessary or possible. But it is a safe rule to follow to refuse to be dictated to by the spirit and decline to go on blindly.

THINGS YOU SHOULD NOT DO.

Further, do not be always ready to be controlled, or to 'drop into a trance' just because you 'feel the influence,' and 'a spirit wants to say something,' or to oblige injudicious friends who 'wish you would let him come.' Many people are very inconsiderate, and although they do not *say* so, they *think* (and the sensitive *feels* their thought) 'I do wish he would go under control and tell me something.' You should decline to be controlled *except at* such times as *you* voluntarily and with set purpose lay yourself open to the influence of the spirits, in a properly constituted circle, or when you are prepared for it. If the spirits cause you to do foolish or ridiculous things, gently but firmly refuse to again submit. Do not be induced to yield by promises of future greatness and success. Not a few people have had their vanity tickled and their ambitions aroused by the flattery of crafty and

domineering spirits, and in consequence they have been misled into doing and saying very absurd and foolish things.

Your relations with the spirits should be upon the common-sense basis of fraternal co-operation; of mutual respect and confidence; of unity of spirit and harmony of purpose. If you respect yourself and respect the office of mediumship, you will almost certainly attract spirits who will respect you and co-operate with you in a wise fashion.

PROBABLE EXPERIENCES.

When sensitive people sit in the 'circle' the first evidence of spirit influence which they generally receive, and which you will be likely to experience, is a sense of heaviness in the hands, as though they were glued to the table; pricking sensations, as of 'needles and pins' or as of a mild electric current, in the hands and along the arms may follow, accompanied by a feeling as of a cold breeze blowing over the backs of the hands; numbness and loss of sensation, or sudden jerks or vibratory shakings of the hands and arms may ensue. These involuntary and spasmodic actions may become more continuous, until your hands revolve rapidly and commence to make 'passes' over your own head and face, as if you were mesmerising yourself. You should not be afraid, nor should the sitters become alarmed. Harmonious singing by the rest of the members of the circle will prove helpful, and you will probably find that, as the movements become more definite, motions will be made as if you were writing. In that case, paper and pencil being provided, the conductor of the circle should request that an attempt to write may be made. Very probably strokes, circles, or other illegible marks will ensue. At first the operators do not know how to direct the force in just the right way for successful results, and they have to learn by experience.

Perhaps table movements or raps may occur, and communications be established by those methods. Remarkable results are sometimes secured at the initial séance, but at sub-

sequent meetings, failures, confusion, unreliable messages, and unsatisfactory phenomena may alone transpire. Do not jump to the conclusion that you are dealing with evil spirits—be cool and hopeful. Remember you are merely experimenting, and that the spirit people are also, perhaps for the first time, trying to penetrate the veil and utilise powers and agencies of which, in all probability, they know as little as you. So many possible disturbing factors exist—weather, varying psychical conditions of the sitters, agitated mental states, too great expectancy, or anxiety for successful demonstrations—that the true disposition to be maintained by the inquirer is that of the scientific student, who carefully watches what transpires and endeavours to discover the causes of failure as well as the conditions which favour success.

By conforming to the advice which we have already given your innate powers will in all probability soon be revealed, but the spirit operators may have to experiment with you in different ways in order to ascertain what they can do best under the conditions that are afforded to them. When they have succeeded in establishing communication with you and your friends, you should request them to exercise their power in the production of phenomena which will demonstrate the presence and operation of excarnate Intelligences.

WHAT KIND OF MEDIUM SHALL I BE?

As a general principle the best results are secured by special development along the line of natural aptitude. A 'Jack of all phases and master of none' is a failure in mediumship as well as elsewhere. You may find it helpful to visit a public medium who is already developed and can examine you and give you an insight into your natural psychic powers, and counsel you regarding your qualifications and aptitudes, and tell you what to do; but do not attach too much importance to directions received in that way, because so much depends on the knowledge and power of the operator. One spirit might use you with success in

one direction and another in some other phase; just as one mesmerist may make a subject clairvoyant when another has previously attempted to do so and failed. Nothing but actual experience will settle the point. If, however, after a reasonable amount of patient devotion to the experiment you do not succeed, or are disappointed with what has been done, it will be advisable to effect a change in the conditions. A dissatisfied state of mind is a dangerous one.

You may, if you choose, *sit by yourself*, and try to obtain table movements, or to get 'automatic' or passive writing. You can make experiments in psychometry or try crystal gazing, or endeavour to 'visualise' and to become clairaudient, but we should *not advise you to sit alone* and invite spirits to put you into the trance, as it would be awkward if some boisterous or foreign spirit were to take control of you and decline to withdraw his influence, or did not know how to release you and restore you to your normal state; it might prove injurious to yourself, and your friends would be frightened and not know what to do unless they were experienced Spiritualists. It is better to join a good private circle.

WHY SOME PEOPLE DO NOT DEVELOP.

You may have been informed already that you are a medium, and that if you sit you will develop certain gifts; but you may say: 'I *have* sat and have not developed as I was assured I should!' That is quite probable. The medium whom you consulted may have misjudged your capabilities; the spirit may have estimated what *he* could have done with or through you, and, from his point of view, may have been perfectly accurate; but possibly the spirits who have endeavoured to develop you were unable to succeed. People often say: 'I have been told many times that I should make a good medium, but I have not yet had satisfactory results.' When we hear such statements we are prompted to ask: 'Have you sat for development for any length of time in a harmonious and con-

genial circle?' You cannot expect growth unless you give the requisite conditions. You might as well anticipate a harvest without sowing the seed—just because you bought a sack of wheat! The marvellous results achieved by expert acrobats and athletes are due to their indomitable determination to succeed, and their steady and continuous training of eye, and muscle, and nerve. They concentrate their attention and focus all their powers, and are at once temperate, patient, and persevering in their experiments. The same spirit of devotion; the same firm attitude and watchful attention to all the details; and the same observance of the conditions, physical, mental, moral, and spiritual, are needed if you would educate yourself and become a fit and serviceable instrument for exalted spirit intelligences to afford humanity the benefit of their experiences 'over there.'

REGARDING MESMERIC 'DEVELOPERS.'

Mesmeric influence from an experienced operator, for the purpose of inducing susceptibility, is sometimes helpful to a sensitive. If the mesmerist can put you into the trance condition and then hand you over to trustworthy spirits to control you, well and good. In the same way, mesmeric 'passes' may be helpful in the liberation of your clairvoyant powers. The operator may succeed in throwing you into the deep trance state, in which you may travel or become clairvoyant, but we should not recommend you to submit to mesmeric influence or hypnotic suggestions from anyone, unless you know that he is an experienced and a thoroughly honourable and trustworthy individual.

In circles for development one member is frequently impressed, or controlled, to make magnetic passes over another to aid in his unfoldment; and if such a thing should happen to you, and the influence is congenial, there need be no objection raised by you; but beware of those people who claim to be able, by mesmerism, to develop you into a medium in a given period of time. Professor Loveland says: 'The

conscious self must first consent before any control can be acquired over the sub-conscious or automatic self-hood. . . In too many cases, only the power of auto-hypnotism is manifested, and we have obsession, fraud and folly as the result. There is one sure method of detecting the auto-hypnotic trance, and showing the difference between that and the genuine spirit trance. Any competent magnetist or hypnotiser can throw off the spell in all cases of self-induced trance, unless it has reached the condition of complete catalepsy. But, if a spirit has induced the trance and controls the medium, it will laugh at your efforts to restore him to the ordinary condition. The most unfortunate feature of this sorry business is that the poor subject is self-deceived and imagines that he or she is a full-fledged medium; and when he has made some terrible break on the platform or elsewhere he shields himself by laying all the responsibility upon some supposed spirit guide.'

No sensible person would surrender himself to the magnetic influence of a human being of whom he knew nothing; he would need to know and have confidence in him before doing so; yet we find many who, impelled by a desire to be a medium, without understanding how much the word implies, sit down and invite any spirit that comes along to experiment upon them! Under such circumstances nothing but a high motive and a pure purpose will protect them from the operations of unwise or mischievous intelligences. As well might they go and sit in a public place with their eyes blindfolded and with an inscription on their breasts, 'Who will come and magnetise me?'

It has been frequently asserted, and we believe with truth, that no one who is averse to it can be hypnotised unless he yields to persuasion without realising the need for resistance. No one who is watchful over himself can be drawn away to paths of vice or crime who has not the inclination in that direction, unless he is ignorant and too confiding. The man who has gained control over his desires and is morally self-centred

cannot be hypnotised or suggestionised into wrong-doing, because the very suggestion is repugnant to him, and therefore there is little or no danger so long as the sensitive is alive to the need (which always exists for everyone) to maintain a level head and a pure purpose; a strong 'will' to do the right and a strong 'won't' towards the wrong.

PSYCHIC SPONGES.

There are some people who, when they sit in a circle, are extremely helpful, and give off the right kind of force that readily blends with that of the sensitive; but there are others who draw upon and appropriate the psychic forces which are needed by the medium, or by the spirits through the medium. While they mean well, enjoy the séances, and feel '*so* much better' after them, the success of the circle is endangered so far as the object for which it was formed is concerned. Such persons should be requested to sit outside the circle or be asked kindly to refrain from attending.

FALLING ASLEEP.

If you should fall into a quiescent state resembling sleep when in the circle, and neither feel inclination nor ability to move or speak, do not be alarmed, but if you are sufficiently conscious, request that a good spirit friend will come and use you. If, however, you are mentally inactive as well as physically quiescent, your friends must intervene after a time and audibly solicit spirit aid. If you get no further, and at subsequent sittings continue to fall into this inert and unsatisfactory comatose condition, you must make up your mind before you sit that you will awake out of the lethargy after about ten minutes unless some spirit influences you in some way. You must give yourself the 'suggestion' to awake, and after that you might try what you could do in the way of psychometry or conscious automatic writing.*

* See Part III. of this 'Guide' for instructions regarding psychical self-culture.

TRANCE AND INSPIRATIONAL SPEAKING.

The mental phases of mediumship involve the development of a degree of impressibility which may range from the conscious reception of suggestions, or impulses, or thoughts from other intelligences to the lucidity on the spiritual plane which is displayed by conscious clear-seeing, or spirit-sight. The phenomena of super-sensuous perception due to spirit influence are elicited in much the same way as the mesmerist arouses the clairvoyant powers of his subject. The somnambulic sleep, or trance, is induced in the subject whose voluntary powers are no longer under his control, and the involuntary processes are well-nigh suspended. In this state his spirit sometimes gains a large degree of freedom, and is able to perceive on the inner or spiritual plane.

If you are likely to become a trance-speaking medium you will probably experience a sensation as of falling or dizziness, as if you are going to faint; this may continue until you become entirely unconscious on the external plane, and you will know no more until you regain your normal condition, although, while under the influence of the operator, you may have been speaking more or less coherently. He may not, at first, be able to convey the exact impression that he wishes to produce. His 'suggestion' is not strong enough to set your involuntary nerves vibrating in just the way that he desires; consequently his thought is not transferred to you in a manner that insures faithful reproduction, and you should not be disappointed because of such imperfect results at the outset. If your mind is filled with the desire to succeed you will become too self-conscious, and thus destroy the very conditions upon which success depends. You need to lose sight of yourself and become calm and receptive, so that the message may be transmitted without hindrance.

It is very probable that you will be semi-conscious. The influence will stimulate your breathing, which will become rapid and irregular; your eyes will close and you will be

unable to open them, and your hands and body may twitch and jerk as if you were being subjected to a series of galvanic shocks. The sitters should keep calm and sympathetic, but they should check any tendency on your part to undue noise, or violence, or absurdity. You will be aware of what you are doing, but unable to exercise the *will* to interfere or try to stop. You will most likely become conscious of an impulse to do something or to 'blurt out' certain words. If you resist you will only make the task more difficult and hinder the attainment of the end you have in view. Your best course is to hold your judgment in suspense; do not be hostile or critical, but act out your impressions. Let the influence have its course—say what you feel you *must* say, and never mind about your own state of consciousness. You will be much more likely to pass into the unconscious trance (if you desire to do so) if you can say: 'Now, spirit friend, I trust myself to you and will yield my body and brain to your control, for you to do the best you can with and through me. I am willing to co-operate with you for the time being, and trust you to do your utmost for the good of others.' It is not necessary that you should be entirely *un*conscious, although you may think it is, to prove that another Intelligence is operating upon and through you. The evidence of that fact will be displayed in the nature of the messages and the unusual ability exhibited by you when under the stimulating influence of the operator.

There is only one way to develop as an inspirational speaker, and that is to *try*. Take every opportunity to *express* the thoughts that come to you. Speak, and fear not. Facility of expression will come. You cannot expect that ideas will be poured through you unless you let them flow. Study elocution, if you like; the *way* in which things are said is very important, seeing that it has great influence upon the hearers. Do not be troubled about *who* the inspirers are if you receive and express bright, true, rational, and helpful thoughts. If you utter the thoughts that come to you others

will follow, but if you do not speak out your first thoughts you cannot expect that others will be given. You may know before you speak what is going to be said—even so, out with it, and let the sitters judge as to its value.

Most mediums find that their powers vary. Sometimes there seems to be a high degree of lucidity. The impressions which they receive are clear and strong; the ideas seem to flow through them freely, and the quality of the inspirations is exhilarating, and they feel strengthened and uplifted. But there are other days when they feel very much *alone*. The influence that affects them is weak; they get only hazy impressions, and there is a woeful lack of ideas. It seems as though the heavens were brass, or they themselves were unresponsive. They know not why, but whatever they can 'lay hold of,' so to speak, or whatever the spirit people can project into their sphere seems forced and incomplete. If you should have these experiences, turn your attention to something else. Do not 'harp on one string' too much. Physical exercise, change of scene, social company, and rest will soon restore your tone and renew your powers.

Should you be controlled to give public 'addresses' it will be best to withhold the name of the spirit who prompts or compels your utterances. Most intelligent spirits prefer to be known by their teachings rather than by the names they bore when on earth. If the addresses are eloquent and beautiful and the thoughts presented are good and true, they will be acceptable on their own merits, and would not be one whit more valuable because they were inspired by some well-known historical person. Whereas, if you announce the name of the spirit, your hearers may consider that the address does not come up to the standard of the ability displayed by that individual before he died, and may discredit and discard the good that they might otherwise have found in your utterances.

If spirits voluntarily tender you their advice upon business matters, especially if they are friends or relatives whom you

know and trust, and who, when here, were capable and experienced business people, you may well give heed to their counsel, even though you may not feel it wise to follow it; but do not make a practice of going to the spirits for information regarding matters of trade or finance. Why should you expect that wise and enlightened spirits should concern themselves about stocks and shares, commerce, or manufacturing? Probably they knew but little about those things when they were here, and have no need for such knowledge over there; and it will be well for you to learn to live your own life, do your own business, and accept the ordinary duties and responsibilities which naturally devolve upon you. Let mediumship be a *part* of your education and development, not the *whole*.

A FEW WORDS OF WARNING.

Do not go into public promiscuous 'developing circles.' There is always danger of 'cross magnetisms' and disorderly manifestations in such gatherings. Owing to the mixed and inharmonious mental, moral, and psychical conditions which necessarily exist where a number of strangers and curiosity-seekers are attracted, you run the risk of being affected by undeveloped, unprincipled, frivolous, mercenary, self-assertive, or even immoral spirits, who being attracted to such assemblies seek to influence incautious and susceptible people who ignorantly render themselves liable to their control. The people 'on the other side' are human beings of all grades; they are not morally purified by passing through the death-change; and as we are constantly sending into the other state 'all sorts and conditions of people,' you need not be at all surprised if you get into intercourse with the vain and foolish, the unreliable and pretentious, or the selfish and sinful, if you indiscriminately open the doors of your psychic self and give a free invitation to any spirit 'passer by.'

'You can waste your time, you can sit in circles, absorb all kinds of psychological influences, exhaust your own, and in

many cases become so filled up with contending influences that you are in a state of psychological fever all the time, or so exhaust yourself that you will become as limp and useless as a rag. This is not the way to use the opportunities you have; and you should avoid the injudicious, promiscuous, and insane methods of development of many who are extremely anxious to develop you as mediums, and who often bring discredit upon the subject of mediumship, and do no one the slightest practical good—not even themselves.' *

We admit that the motives of those who conduct public promiscuous developing circles are good in most cases, but their methods are frequently 'injudicious'—to put it mildly.

Under ordinary circumstances, your own pure purpose and the spirits who are in sympathy with your exalted desires and intentions, are sufficient safeguards against the intrusion of low, mischievous or malicious spirits, but you should not venture into conditions which require the trained and disciplined will, and the influence of wise and powerful spirits to protect you against danger, until you have acquired the ability to render yourself positive to the psychic spheres of undesirable people, both in and out of the form, and can voluntarily become negative and responsive to the true and trustworthy friends whom you know and love.

* 'Practical Occultism,' by J. J. Morse.

CHAPTER V.

PRACTICAL ADVICE TO SENSITIVES.—CONTINUED.

The importance of mediumship can hardly be exaggerated, for, without it, there could be no evidence of the survival, identity, and progressive evolution of those who have shuffled off the 'muddy vesture of decay,' their physical bodies.—B. G. E.

The action of the controlling spirit is exactly analogous to what is known among you as mesmeric control. The spirit, whether in or out of the body, operates on another spirit in the same way. The controlling spirit affects the controlled by mesmeric power, and the shiverings are caused by the passage of the influence from the controlling to the controlled. When you know more of the action of all the forces which are operating round and in you, you will see that they are far simpler than you fancy; and that what we describe as will power is at the root of everything.—'IMPERATOR,' *through* 'M.A. (OXON.).'

THE WHEREABOUTS OF THE CONTROL.

IT is not necessary that the spirit operator, geographically speaking, should be near you when you experience his power, although clairvoyants frequently see the spirits at work upon their subjects, making 'passes' over, and pouring out their influence upon them. This force, or 'aura,' is luminous; it varies in density and colour according to the conditions, and is often thrown upon the sensitive from behind, the spirit mesmerist standing a few feet from, and a little above, the medium. The operators who do this preliminary work of entrancement and training are almost invariably those who are not very far removed from the earth grade of psychical environment—spirits whose aura is both physical and psychical, and who are therefore able to relate themselves readily to,

and affect, the psychic sphere of the neophyte, whose conditions are not responsive to the higher and more subtle vibrations of exalted spirits, and therefore cannot yet be influenced by their more advanced thoughts.

As the work of unfoldment proceeds and your psychic nature is tuned to a higher key, the spirits who have been engaged in the preparatory work are able, after they have entranced you, to stand aside and hand you over to the more advanced and powerful controls, who ensphere your brain and act upon it. These enlightened 'teaching spirits' are seldom able to draw near to the earth; distance is no barrier to them, save only the distance of grade and quality of thought and spirit, or the difference of plane, or spiritual state. It follows from what we have said that you can contribute largely to the development of your own powers by the cultivation of harmony; by sincerity of purpose and purity of motive as well as by spiritual concentration and aspiration.

In the developing circle and upon the public platform, should you undertake public work, it will be of great service to you to have kindly and sympathetic sitters by your side. A cold, self-contained, absorbing, critical, or hostile sitter, or chairman, will frequently, although unintentionally, derange the conditions or prevent success by his uncongenial sphere and hard mental attitude, which inevitably affects his psychic emanations, and in turn detrimentally operates upon your psychic sphere and sensitive mind.

SOME NECESSARY PRECAUTIONS.

Precautions should be taken on all occasions against sudden movements on the part of the sitters. In those séances where physical phenomena occur it has frequently been noticed that the breaking of the circle has led to the cessation of the manifestations, and similar results ensue in séances where mental mediumship is being evolved. Abrupt and unexpected movements disturb the conditions, and as these are centred in the medium all such disturbances re-act upon

him. On the public platform, if you would have the best results, you should, if possible, be accompanied by a kindly and appreciative chairman, who should on no account allow other persons to move about near to or pass behind you. Spiritualists talk freely to inquirers about the necessity for observing conditions, but frequently fail to regard them themselves. We have known trance speakers experience considerable pain as the result of the thoughtlessness of individuals who have passed close behind them just as the address was about to commence or during its delivery.

As an illustration of the effect upon sensitives of unexpected disturbances, we may mention a recent experience at the usual weekly séance of a medium who is under development. While she was being controlled the fire had burnt hollow, and the coals fell together, causing a sudden illumination. The medium was very much affected, but with an effort the spirit was able to maintain its hold upon her. The husband of the medium placed a newspaper in front of the fire to shut off the light, but put it a little too near, so that in a few minutes the paper caught fire and burst into a big blaze. This second disturbance so affected the medium that the control was broken; she sank back in her chair in a fainting condition, and it was some time before her consciousness was restored. The medium was laid upon a sofa and restoratives were applied. After some four or five minutes the spirit spoke through her a few words to the effect that the medium would recover soon, and that the spirit people were assisting to restore her. In about another five minutes the medium recovered consciousness, and felt little the worse except for some headache.

'CALLING UP' THE SPIRITS.

'I can call spirits from the vasty deep, but will they come?—aye, there's the rub.' Some very curious notions have got abroad in regard to spirits which it is necessary we should consider lest you should have adopted them, and the

difficulty of your investigation and development be increased in consequence. One of the principal and most curious of these misconceptions is the prevailing idea that mediums 'call up' or 'bring' the spirits—as though the people of the other world were at their 'beck and call,' and were compelled to do their behest.

This is not only an absurd but a dangerous idea, as it may lead to a variety of unpleasant experiences. Occultists sometimes assure us that the 'adept' occupies a superior position to that of the medium, for, they affirm, he can *control* the spirits; he can 'summon' them and compel them to do his bidding instead of being controlled by them. Let us suppose that this claim is not a mere empty assertion, but is based upon knowledge, what kind of spirits will serve, and consent to be enslaved by, the man who thus despotically imposes his will upon them? We have been assured by one who claimed to know from personal experience, that only very undeveloped beings can be reached and *employed* by the occultist, and he is even then in constant danger, for, should he lose his power to subjugate them, they will inevitably turn upon him and exact a terrible retribution. Their influence, even when he is successful, is likely to be demoralising in its effect upon him, said our informant, and it is far better, therefore, to follow a healthy, rational, and spiritual course. You will be spared many trials and avoid many pitfalls if you recognise the *humanity* of the people of the other life. This implies that they have wills and ways of their own; that they can think, and plan, and perform along independent and original lines; and that no self-respecting spirit will consent to be a tool of, or an appendage to, a medium, any more than the latter should submit to dictation from, or coercion by, the spirit who uses him.

When mediums talk about 'my spirits,' or 'my guides,' with an air of proprietorship, one is inclined to ask what manner of people their 'guides' are; just as the statement, 'My guides *won't let* me do so-and-so,' awakens one's scepti-

cism or pity, or the fear that the sensitive, by over-much confidence and credulity, has fallen into the hands of unscrupulous pretenders on the other side, or is self-deluded by his own egotistic desires for communion with some exalted 'authority.'

The spirit people act of their own volition. They are prompted by similar motives to those which actuated them while they were here. They cannot be 'commandeered' and 'brought' by you, or by those who sit with you. They will visit you if they love you, or if they can help you; but do not try to *compel* them.

You may send out your thoughts and offer a kindly invitation, but if the spirits are otherwise engaged, if they have no desire to return, if they do not believe it possible, or lawful, or desirable to re-visit these 'glimpses of the moon,' they will not come. You *may* 'call spirits' from 'vasty deeps' or heavenly plains, but depend upon it they will exercise their own judgment whether they will respond; and you will need to be on your guard, doubly on your guard, if you indiscriminately open your psychic nature to visitants from the other side in promiscuous conditions, lest some impersonating practical joker, or even worse, should seize the opportunity to amuse himself and strut in borrowed plumes at your expense.

'GUIDES.'

Another erroneous idea needs to be considered. Somehow, we cannot quite discover when or how it originated, a notion has got abroad that every person is accompanied by spirits who have been 'appointed' to act as his 'guides,' and that these spirits are in constant attendance, keeping watch and ward over him. Another version of this idea is presented by those who claim that we are each one attended by good *and* evil spirits who continually contend for mastery, and make us the battle-ground of their conflict, tempting us with every art and wile of evil, and alluring us with every power

and stimulus of love to our injury or our happiness, and that, therefore, as we by our actions or desires give countenance or favour, leaning this way or that, one or the other triumphs in this conflict. Regarded as a poetic impersonation of the internal struggle which transpires in our consciousness, there is something suggestive in this pretty way of representing the fact that we are not left entirely unaided to fight the battle of the spirit, and that in our hour of need, when we truly desire them, there are loving hearts and willing helpers on the other side who will respond to the soul's cry for help. But when it is literalised and localised, and the figure of speech is mistaken for fact; when certain spirits are supposed to be *appointed* to the life-long task of being our second selves on the spiritual plane and follow us like spiritual Paul Pry's, then the poetry loses its prettiness, and the misconstrued 'figure' becomes a falsehood.

Because in specific cases and for a special work certain spirits may have co-operated, and selected a sensitive through whose agency they have endeavoured to carry out their plans, and teach definite truths, or produce striking phenomena, that fact does not justify the supposition that *every* person who is mediumistic is chosen by a 'band of guides' who have no other occupation in life but to be in constant attendance upon him, as some people imagine; and not until you have received clear demonstrations of the fact should you admit, even to yourself, that you have 'guides' who desire to use you for a particular end.

So many people with a 'mission,' so many modern 'Messiahs' have sprung up, that you should be chary of giving credence to statements that you are to become a 'great medium,' that you will have a 'remarkable career,' that through you a 'new reformation' will be effected, &c., and so forth. Be content to take short views and keep a level head. Hold your judgment in suspense if necessary; modestly go your way and do the work of the hour, for, as the old adage has it, 'the proof of the pudding is in the eating,' and the

proof of the accuracy of these and similar assertions will be (can only be) ascertained by the course of events; and it behoves you to walk circumspectly and maintain a rational attitude, remembering that 'Rome was not built in a day.'

'Heaven is not reached at a single bound;
But we build the ladder by which we rise
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,
And we mount to its summit round by round.'

IMPERSONATING MEDIUMSHIP.

It is, however, very probable that some spirit will control you who wishes to communicate with a friend, and for that purpose he may find it necessary to cause you to impersonate himself. It seems to be a general law governing these manifestations, that when a spirit relates himself to the psychic conditions of the earth and takes control of a sensitive for the first time, he is compelled to re-enact his dying experiences, and mediums present a pantomimic reproduction of the causes of death and the accompanying symptoms which vividly recall to the observers the last sad and solemn incidents connected with the 'passing' of their dear ones. Not infrequently the medium reproduces in a most characteristic way, movements, modes of breathing or coughing, gestures, ejaculations, and even utters the few 'last words' that were breathed by the dying one. You may (and most probably will) be compelled to do this sort of thing. You may be partially, or even acutely, conscious of what you are doing or saying, and may feel afraid to yield to the impulse, or shrink from conforming to the desire that urges you on to speak—perhaps to cry, to pour out endearing words, to say or do things the significance of which *you* do not comprehend. Our advice under such circumstances can only be this: Keep as calm and as collected as you can; trust to the sincerity of the spirit and the good sense of the sitters, and throw off your fear; yield obedience to the control; neither help nor hinder; just do and say what you feel you *have* to do or say, and leave the results. You

cannot, or should not, be held responsible for failure by the sitters, if there is no recognition; and by responding and giving free course to the 'suggestion' that reaches you, as an impulse or mental impression, greater success will follow, and the development you seek will be promoted. If, however, you find that the impersonations are untrue, and the sitters are unable to interpret or recognise what you do or say after you have followed out your impressions a number of times, then resist them with all your strength of will and require from the spirit the proof of his identity in some other way.

Spirits often desire to communicate some special information or confess some wrong, and are relieved by successfully performing the task. In such cases, says Hudson Tuttle, they take on the conditions of the medium, and by the association, the last experiences of their earth life. 'It is difficult, perhaps impossible, for a spirit passing from earth life by a violent and painful death not to have the sensations of its last earthly experience revived in itself and reflected upon the medium when it thus comes in direct relation with the earth sphere. This is, however, quite distinct from that form of impersonation in which the medium is caused to imitate the death scene as a test of identity. One is under the direct control of the spirit, and in the other case the spirit is controlled by preceding conditions.' Addressing a class of students in San Francisco, Mr. J. J. Morse, in the trance condition, said: 'This form of mediumship (impersonation) is the most valuable that the world can possibly have to-day.' . . . 'When by the aid of the impersonating medium (the inquirer) is enabled to see his beloved friends, and they make themselves actual and visible in the personality of the medium, plain to his consciousness and understanding, and tell him specifically points and facts of identity and experience that were utterly beyond the power of any other intelligence to tell, then he has something borne in upon him through the senses of sight, of hearing and understanding

that appeals to him, . . therefore the personating medium is the most valuable medium you can present to inquirers.' *

In illustration of the naturalness and convincing character of this phase of mediumship, we quote some of the experiences narrated by Mr. A. Smedley, in his 'Reminiscences.' The medium, Mrs. Hitchcock, was a friend of ours, a thoroughly sincere and trustworthy, high-principled woman. Mr. Smedley attended one of her séances, and was very much surprised at what took place. On informing his wife of what had occurred, she expressed a desire to invite Mrs. Hitchcock to hold a séance in their own home. The invitation was given, and it was accepted by the medium, who was at that time a perfect stranger to both Mr. and Mrs. Smedley, who also invited a number of their friends. The meeting was opened with a hymn and prayer. After a second hymn had been sung, Mrs. Hitchcock passed under influence, and for a short time seemed dazed and unable to speak. Mr. Smedley says: 'She then passed under the control of an intelligent being, opened her eyes, and manifested the greatest amazement.

'After looking round the room very deliberately at various objects, then at one person after another, and fixing her eyes on my wife, she ran across the room, and throwing her arms around her neck, kissed her most affectionately, addressing her as "My dear sister."

'After speaking with her in endearing terms she came across the room to me, and placing her right hand on my shoulder, said: "Well, my good brother." (This was exactly as a deceased sister of my wife's had been in the habit of doing.) "How unspeakably glad I am for such a privilege as this! When we used to sit on the hearth at night, conversing on various topics that used to interest us so much, we little expected we should ever have such a privilege. You know we used to sit up at night discussing theological questions till the embers in the grate died out, and sometimes a

* 'Practical Occultism.'

chiding voice from upstairs called out: 'Alfred, Alfred, do come to bed. Do you know what time it is? You know Charlotte is not fit to sit up so late.'" This was precisely what had taken place, the exact words being used.

'She referred to a number of incidents known only to her and ourselves. She asked for an album in which she had written the dedication, pointing this out, and also various pieces of poetry she had written in it.

'She asked for a hymn book and desired us to sing what had been her favourite hymn, which at my request she instantly found. She next asked for a Bible, and asked me to read her favourite psalm. I requested her to find it although I knew well which it was. She turned to it instantly, and I read: "The Lord is my shepherd," &c.

'When the psalm was finished, the medium stood transfigured before us; her countenance was radiant, and her eyes bright with a heavenly light. Turning to my wife, she said, "Sister dear, by inviting strangers to your house to-night you have entertained angels unawares!"

'After the meeting the medium remarked: "When under control I was strongly influenced to look round for a picture, but could not find it. I do not know what it meant, but the control was anxious to find a picture."

'My wife replied: "My sister painted a picture of the Saviour bearing His cross, many years ago, and it now hangs in our dining-room."

'The above incidents, combined with her mannerisms, and bearing in mind that the medium was an entire stranger to us, and uneducated, were sufficient evidence of the presence and influence of her deceased sister to cause my wife to exclaim, "Of a truth, that *was* my sister Charlotte."'

The foregoing is an interesting glimpse of the kind of mediumship which carries conviction of the 'real presence' of the so-called dead, and your aim should be to get into communication with the intelligent operator at the other end of the line, and elicit from him evidences of his identity and

purpose. Table movements, raps, materialisations, writings, messages, or controls, are of comparatively little value unless by their agency you can secure proofs of the personal identity and survival after death of your departed friends, or some indication of a rational purpose on the part of the operator.

PSYCHOMETRY AND CLAIRVOYANCE.

If you have good vital magnetism and are sufficiently sensitive, spirits may put you into the unconscious—or at least into the *semi*-conscious—trance state, and cause you to become clairvoyant or psychometrical while under their control. They may, through you, diagnose the diseases of, and cause you to lay hands upon, and heal, the sick. You may assist them in their efforts by maintaining your own health and observing the conditions which they recommend, and which experience shows are conducive to success. While you co-operate with them thus to secure the fullest possible unfoldment of your psychic nature, the reactive benefits that will accrue to yourself as the result of their efforts will be very marked, especially so if you assist them by making experiments for *normal* self-cultivation, in which, you may rest assured, you will not be left unaided, and will begin to find that you can consciously do some of the things which were formerly only possible when you were under control. The spirits will help in your experiments if they are wise, because such self-culture on your part will promote the success of their work. If you take one step on the road they will be able to help you to take the second much more easily than they could *make* you take the first if you were indifferent.

It is necessary to remember that mental mediumship depends upon the degree of susceptibility and responsiveness, conscious or unconscious, on the part of the medium to the impressions, suggestions, pictures, thoughts, sensations, and impulses which may reach and affect him from various sources —from *in*carnate or *ex*carnate Intelligences. This fact makes it difficult to classify the experiences of the recipient; and as

all psychic sensations seem to be merged in the one grand sense—*perception*—it is hard to differentiate them and say just what *is* psychometry, clairvoyance, clairaudience, impression, mental picture, thought-transference, intuition, or sympathetic response to the feelings and ideas of others in, or out, of the body. But it will be unwise for you to be too analytical, especially in your initial experiences. The first requisite is to develop your sensibility to the psychic conditions, auras, ethers, vibrations; classification may be attempted afterwards; but if you pause to analyse every sensation or impulse to determine if it is your own or someone else's, you will not make much progress.

Suppose you wish to become a psychometrist and to interpret the soul-sensations which you experience; you can easily make some interesting experiments if you ask your friends to lend you something belonging to, or a letter written by, a person you do not know. If a number of articles are offered you, do not let them be touched by others, and keep them separate. Take one article at a time to experiment with; hold it in your hand or press it to your forehead, and try to get some idea of the sort of person who owns it; describe what you think he is like; explain any sensations that come to you that you think may indicate his state of mind, bodily condition, general character, spiritual surroundings, past experiences, present situation, feelings, and prospects. You will need to be spontaneous; do not wait to receive a very *decided* impression. 'First thoughts are best,' as a rule, in experiments of this nature; therefore speak out at once and describe your feelings fearlessly, and run the risk of being mistaken.

We are as yet but groping on the borders of the wonderful spirit-realm, seeking the clue that will lead us to the true interpretation of the subtle interior cognitions by which sensitives perceive spiritual states and things; hence, if you get a 'mental picture,' or seem to see an appearance, whether it is subjective or objective—an image, picture, thought-form, or

a spirit—whatever it may be, it will help you if you describe what you see, or *think* you see, as fully and as clearly as possible. But if you are too timid to speak and are afraid to risk a rebuff, neither you nor others will be benefited; remember, 'Nothing venture, nothing win.'

To assist in focussing your attention and concentrating your psychic power for the cultivation of clairvoyance, you should take a clear glass tumbler, fill it with clean water and place it upon a stand or table over which a plain dark cloth has been spread, in such a position that it will not reflect any of the surrounding objects. It may be advisable to put up a screen (a folding draught-board will answer admirably if draped with black), so as to get the glass in the shadow and protect it from the direct rays of light. Then seat yourself so that you can gaze easily upon the glass or down into the water. Now look steadily at it—not so as to strain your eyes, but with sufficient intentness to fix your attention, and mentally ask the spirits to show you something or to reveal themselves. About a quarter of an hour will at first be sufficient for this experiment, and the time may be lengthened as you become accustomed to the effects of the effort. If, after a dozen sittings, you do not perceive figures, symbols, faces, or writing *apparently in* the water, it will be as well to discontinue; but if you are rewarded with some degree of success you will no doubt feel inclined to persevere. Some investigators sit alone in a semi-darkened room, and with closed eyes, mentally desiring that their spirit friends will show themselves. One lady we knew did this, and was instructed to sit with her back to the light, to cover her head with silk, and *wait*. She was advised to either close her eyes or (if she could not keep her mind passive without feeling inclined to go to sleep) to gaze into a glass of water. She sat for a number of times, and began to despair of success, but finally felt the power of spirit people and became a good 'clear-seer.'

As so much will depend upon your ability to give graphic word-pictures of what you see, that others may recognise the

spirits you describe to them, we should advise you to train yourself in that direction. When you are travelling, for instance, you should observe closely the appearance and personal characteristics of your fellow travellers, and then think out how you would describe them to others so as to convey mental pictures which would lead to their recognition. Any little peculiarity of appearance, dress, gesture, or speech should be especially noticed. Similar exercises in regard to places would also be serviceable in cultivating the powers of observation and clear description that are so necessary for success in giving psychometric and clairvoyant delineations, especially so in public meetings.

CLAIRAUDIENCE.

The faculty of clairaudience is frequently developed with that of clairvoyance. Some clairaudient persons distinctly hear the voices of spirits as though they were external, while others hear in a more interior fashion, as though the 'still small voice,' not of conscience, but of a spirit visitant, was heard by the mind. Some 'voices' sound as if they were muffled; or as if they came from a long distance or through an elongated tube. In other cases they sound sharp and clear, but the words are spoken so rapidly that they can hardly be distinguished; or the utterances may be slow and measured, as though each word had to be *forced* out.

Andrew Jackson Davis says: 'When spirits speak to us they address our interior and spiritual sense of hearing, and when we behold spirits we exercise the internal principle of perception or seeing. It not infrequently occurs that an individual thinks his outward senses addressed when, like Saul, he hears a voice pronouncing his name, apparently, from the depths of the air; and when spirits have been seen, the beholder is apt to believe that the vision was confined or addressed to the outward sense of seeing, so distinct and self-evident is a real manifestation of spiritual presence. . . To the healthy and discriminating mind there is no confound-

ing of a substantial vision of super-mundane personages and scenery with the dreamy hallucinations of the disturbed intellect. When the interior senses of the mind distinctly see a spirit, or hear its serene, rich, friendly tones, it is impossible for the thus favoured individual to be mistaken. If, however, as it sometimes happens, we get only an *imperfect glimpse* of some guardian spirit that seeks our recognition and welfare—and if we cannot be absolutely certain and honest in our convictions of that angel presence, and have not a perfect assurance that the vision was no illusion—then it is wisdom to keep our understandings open to the reception of more substantial evidence, to the end that the mind may not be conducted into regions of uncertain hypothesis and imagination.' *

Spiritual association arouses and quickens dormant sensitiveness, and, indeed, some mediums are only clairaudient while the spirit people assist or control them. It is as though they are lifted out from their ordinary condition while under spirit influence, and grow keen in their ability to catch and convey the utterances of the spirits.

The great requisites for the development of this phase of mediumship are *attention*, concentration, desire, listening, and response. The inward hearing can be cultivated by training one's self to be on the alert to catch the echoes from the spheres. We are frequently 'absent-minded' and do not realise what is being said around us. We are too often *in*attentive to the sights and sounds as we go through life, even upon the ordinary plane, and there need be no wonder that we are blind and deaf to our spirit surroundings.

HEALING MEDIUMSHIP.

If you have an idea that you possess healing power you can easily experiment upon your suffering friends or acquaintances. If you are mediumistic, and spirits desire to develop you for this work, you will readily feel that you are impressed what

* A. J. Davis, 'Philosophy of Spiritual Intercourse.'

to do. Your hands will be guided to the proper position, and you will spontaneously make the requisite passes. Magnetic healing has really nothing to do with massage, the induction of sleep, or with any form of hypnotism or mesmerism. The healing medium should centre his thought and interest solely and wholly with the object of effecting a cure. You will need to be sympathetic, but hopeful. Do not let your patient think about his ailments, but arouse his thought and engage his attention upon some outside subject. Make him comfortable, and lead him to expect good results; to do this you must be affirmative and confident. Unless you feel impressed, or are controlled, to do otherwise, sit in front and take hold of the hands of the sufferer for a time, then make gentle, short, downward passes over the part affected, and conclude with long, sweeping passes from head to foot without contact. For local affections, point your hands at or just touch the spot with your finger tips, or make direct horizontal or slightly downward movements, as if you were throwing something at him. A warm, comfortable room is favourable to magnetising, and a genial mental atmosphere, created by cheerful and kindly minds in the operator and persons present, will contribute largely to the success of the treatment. You will do well to act upon your impressions and make the passes in whatever way you feel impelled or compelled. If you operate under spirit guidance you will be 'impressed' more or less clearly how to proceed in each case. In all probability you will sympathetically 'take on,' and be affected by, the symptoms of the disease from which the patient suffers, and in that way be able to form an accurate diagnosis of the case; but you must guard against exhaustion, and should always 'throw off' from yourself the influence that you may have received, and wash your hands carefully after each treatment. Mr. James Coates, in his useful work on 'Human Magnetism,' says: 'In magnetic healing—as distinguished from cures in which "suggestion" is the main factor—the "laying-on of hands" is a special feature of the treatment. . . The

psychopathist lays on hands because he believes that beyond the conditions of health-magnetism furnished by himself he is a conduit through whom a spirit or a "band of spirits" pour healing virtues. I have no doubt that the attitude of mind in all these methods of cure, based upon sincere conviction, is a powerful healing agent.'

WRITING MEDIUMSHIP.

Your hands may be caused to shake and move about as if you desired to write. You may be quite conscious, or only semi-conscious, but you will feel you are unable to prevent the movements. In such a case the sitters should provide paper and pencils and await results. They should speak to the control and request him to work quietly, and in all probability the rapid preliminary scrawls will soon give place to slower and more legible writing.

Many persons have developed as 'automatic writers,' who have never sat in a circle and without being entranced. We should advise you, if you decide to sit alone and make experiments in this direction, to avoid excitement, expectancy and preconceptions. Proceed as though you were speaking to a visible friend, and request that someone will move your hand to write. Provide yourself with a writing pad or several sheets of paper, and, while holding a pencil in readiness, withdraw your thoughts from your hand and arm and assume a passive condition. If you are strongly mediumistic, words and sentences may be written, but you need hardly expect such results at first.

Mr. W. T. Stead says: 'I hold my pen in the ordinary way, but when the writing is beginning I do not rest my wrist or arm upon the paper, so as to avoid the friction and to give the influence, whatever it may be, more complete control of the pen. At first the pen is apt to wander into mere scrawling, but after a time it writes legibly. Unlike many automatic writers who write as well blindfolded as when they read what they write as they are writing it, I can never write

so well as when I see the words as they come. There is danger in this, which is most clearly illustrated when my hand writes verse—especially rhymed verse—for the last word in each line suggests to my conscious mind a possible rhyme for the ending of the following line; this rouses up my mind, my own ideas get mixed with those of the communicating Intelligence, and confusion is the result.'

Inspirational or 'impressional' writing is frequently mistaken for that which is more purely passive or 'automatic.' The sensitive experiences a strong impulse to write, but does not receive any clear or consecutive train of thought. He sets down one word, and then others follow as fast as he can indite them, but he must begin to write before the complete sentence is given to him. In other cases the thoughts flow into his consciousness faster than his pen can record them; but in the truly 'automatic' form of communication the mind of the sensitive is not consciously affected. He can read and think about other and entirely different subjects, and need take no more interest in the work than he would if his hand did not belong to him, or than if a spirit laid hold of and guided the pencil. Some mediums who write automatically have to be mentally quiet; they find that if the mind is preoccupied the hand will not write, although, even in such cases, it frequently happens that the amanuensis is ignorant of the communication until he reads it afterwards.

Mr. J. A. White, an intelligent trance and clairvoyant medium, says: 'There is a great tendency, particularly in cases of automatic writing, to do too much of it. No sooner do some people find that the pencil will move than they spend all their spare time in this fascinating pursuit, which, in their undeveloped state, I believe to be a dangerous and unwise practice. They are apt to exclaim, when any question arises during the day: "Let us see what the spirits have to say." This, carried to extremes, leads to one thing, and one thing only—obsession. I believe in fixing a time, and, unless in exceptional cases, refusing to sit at any other. Of course I am

speaking of mediumship while it is in the budding stage. A developed medium can judge for himself, and knows from experience how far to go. It is a favourite trick of a certain class of spirits when they find they have a sensitive who can "feel" them, to give them that pricking sensation in the arm which denotes their presence. "So-and-so wants to write," and away rushes the medium for the pencil, and sits down. This I do not believe in. I have seen far more harm than good come from it. The proper way to develop, in my opinion, is to sit at home in a small, carefully-selected circle, two or three times a week, at stated hours, and with a *competent conductor* who knows what he is doing.'

A French writer in 'Les Grands Horizons de la Vie' emphasises the same point. He says: 'We urge beginners in their own interest not to take up the pencil (*i.e.*, for automatic writing) or to sit at a table (for communications) at any free moment, without rhyme or reason, for disorder in experiment is one of the first and most serious dangers to be avoided. An absolutely strict rule should be made not to attempt the effort more than once every other day.'

The communications that are received by the various forms of passive, impressional, automatic, and inspirational writing must not be regarded as valuable merely because of the conditions under which they were obtained, nor because of their spirit origin, real or supposed.

'Under all circumstances receive with the utmost reserve and caution long-winded communications from notable characters who claim to be "Napoleon Buonaparte," "Lord Bacon," "Socrates," or other great personages; for, in the majority of cases, the value of the communication is exactly the converse of the importance of the name attached.'* This applies to automatic writings quite as much as to spoken messages. Judge the statements made by the ordinary standards, apart altogether from their claimed exalted origin;

* 'Practical Occultism,' by J. J. Morse.

if rational, beautiful, and spiritually helpful and enlightening, they are worth having on *their own merits;* but if they are unreasonable, wild and dogmatic, or pretentious and flattering, they should be discarded; and, unless they change their character after repeated experiments, your attention should be turned in some other direction.

PLANCHETTE AND OUIJA BOARDS.

To assist in the development of latent capabilities for writing mediumship, various mechanical devices have been constructed, the most popular of these being the Planchette, a heart-shaped little board which has two legs, with wheels at the end, attached to the broader part. Near the pointed end is a hole, into which a piece of pencil is inserted. A large sheet of paper having been spread upon the table, the sitter or sitters (two people often use it) lay their hands, or the tips of their fingers, lightly upon the upper surface and await results. If sitters are sufficiently mediumistic the instrument will begin to move, slowly at first, but faster and more decidedly later, and probably, after some preliminary strokes, circles, &c., it will settle down as if guided by an unseen hand and begin to write. Sitters need to be patient. They may have to wait for some time—even to try, try, try again. If it will not move for one person it will probably do so for another. When it *does* move do not be too hasty in asking questions—do not expect to get *tests* right away. Some people feel that the Planchette moves of itself, so to speak, as if it were alive; with others the impulse to movement seems to be given as from their arms. Sitters occasionally do not know what has been written until the Planchette is removed and the writing deciphered; others get the thought of what is about to be written simultaneously with the movements. Scarcely two mediums have exactly the same experiences, therefore experiment, wait, persevere, until you get into clear communication with Intelligences who have gained pretty full control of the instrument, and are able to give you satisfac-

tory messages. The Planchette may be used as a 'Ouija' by laying down a sheet of paper upon which the letters of the alphabet have been written or printed in a fairly large semicircle, the words 'yes' or 'no' being written at either end, and figures from 1 to 9 written straight across a little lower down. Now remove the pencil and insert a small moderately sharpened stick as a pointer and the Planchette may run about, point to letters or numbers, answer your questions by standing at 'yes' or 'no,' or messages may be spelt out as you watch its movements.

These mechanical contrivances may be helpful to some people under certain conditions, but as a rule, anyone who has the gift of writing mediumship will do equally as well, and in time far better, if he will put a blank sheet of paper before him, hold a pencil in his hand, and *wait*—either for 'automatic' or impressional writing. Any medium, in whose presence tables move or raps occur, will be most likely to succeed with the above-named 'boards.' No one can 'guarantee' that they will move with everyone who experiments with them, or promise that intelligent results will be immediately secured.

DRAWING MEDIUMSHIP.

Many people who have sought development for passive writing have found that their hands have moved in a seemingly erratic fashion, and curious drawings have resulted. Some of these have been beautiful, some symbolical, some few were quite artistic; but many, alas! were more curious than sensible or beautiful. Paintings and crayon drawings have also been produced in this 'passive' (or automatic) style by people who have never had any training in either drawing or painting; but although the colouring has sometimes been remarkable, even fine, we have seldom seen any that commended themselves on the score of their value as artistic productions. Here, as elsewhere, we can only judge by the results, and if mediums were to study the rudiments of art

they would be more easily acted upon by spirit artists to produce good work.

PRIVATE OR PUBLIC: WHICH?

If you find that you have good powers as a medium and your development proceeds satisfactorily, you will soon meet with numbers of people who will be glad to sit with you, and should you be able to obtain for them messages from their spirit friends or give them tests, advice, or guidance, the probability is that you will have more applications for admission to your circle than you can possibly grant. If you develop as a speaker and clairvoyant you will most probably be urged 'from the other side' to devote yourself to the cause and become a public medium, and thus the question will be forced upon you (in the first case by the demands made upon your time and strength, and in the second by the impelling power of the spirits) whether you shall become a public—or 'professional'—medium. It is a matter in respect to which each one should realise his own responsibility and be 'fully persuaded in his own mind' as to where his duty lies, and not be carried away by injudicious or enthusiastic friends, or over-persuaded by zealous spirits. In any case, we would warn you to avoid hasty action. The life of a public 'test' medium is by no means an easy one, and only those who have attained a fairly high degree of lucidity and responsiveness, together with strength of will sufficient to protect themselves against adverse surroundings, are fit to venture out upon the stormy sea, and successfully contend against the psychic influences which will of necessity assail them.

All mediums are more or less in danger of being dominated by their sitters unless they are careful to hold themselves well in hand and maintain a positive attitude towards those who visit them, and therefore it is necessary that you should be watchful and avoid becoming too negative. We have seen sensitives struggling to give test descriptions (both clairvoyantly and psychometrically) who depended too much upon

the sympathy of their visitors, or the harmonious conditions of their audience. You must study and practise until you can resist the adverse influences of your sitters and their surroundings; and, while receptive and responsive to the influences and impressions from the spirits, become impervious to the inharmony, suspicion, sneer and sarcasm of the sitters. If *you* are *strong*, affirmative, determined, you may succeed; but if you are negative to such conditions you may not only fail, but you may respond to the unspoken 'suggestions' from the sitters, and confirm them in their scepticism.

As a public medium you will need much patience, tact, and kindliness. If you are in love with your ministrations you can endure and overcome many of the difficulties and disagreeable trials which are inseparable from public service to 'all sorts and conditions of people,' but an impatient medium need not anticipate much success. Instead of becoming annoyed, dispirited, or angry because you are unable to satisfy or convince those to whom you minister, the best course is to calmly go on and give just what you get. Do not be afraid of making a mistake, and never be ashamed to admit an error. Do not try to evade such an admission or seek to make your description 'fit,' or the message you have given apply, by 'hedging,' but, if you can possibly do so, obtain further particulars until you secure recognition.

To all who aspire to be public mediums or platform speakers we can do no better than quote the words of Professor Loveland: 'Acting as medium is not always reposing on a bed of roses. The roses may be there; so also are the thorns. While humanity is as it is there will be the bitter with the sweet. Our vocation as mediums is to put all the sweet we can into the lives which come into contact with ours; that is the way to change to sweetness the bitter in our own.'

CHAPTER VI.

OBSESSION: ITS CAUSES AND CURE.

There must be some point of contact, of sympathetic vibration or harmony of spirit, otherwise there cannot be any permanent relation or association between a spirit and a sensitive.—B. G. E.

Undeveloped spirits will not be attracted to their opposites. Anyone who thinks he is obsessed should pay attention to himself first. If his own spirit is in the way of righteousness he need have no fear. . . .

The medium who is unbiassed in his own mind cannot be led away from right-doing by the influence of mortals or spirits.—HUDSON TUTTLE.

WE have no desire to dwell unduly upon this branch of our subject, but it is as necessary to point out the pitfalls in the way of the young medium as it is to guide him into the pleasant paths.

We have received numerous inquiries from beginners who have had strange and bewildering experiences, and who, misunderstanding the nature of their feelings, have concluded that they are being obsessed. It is quite evident, therefore, on the principle that 'prevention is better than cure,' and that 'to be forewarned is to be forearmed,' that we must emphasise the various explanations and warnings that we have already given in these pages and in Part I. 'Where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise' is certainly not true in regard to psychic or spirit relationships. Neither is innocence a safeguard against error and folly. Innocent, but ignorant, people are all the time foolishly rushing in 'where angels fear to tread' and incurring risks which, but for their innate simplicity and goodness, might lead to disaster. Even

goodness and purity, however, are not always proof against the attacks of the unscrupulous and crafty. Sincerity of intention does not protect the careless or ignorant from the consequences of their mistakes and neglect of proper precautions.

'UNDUE INFLUENCE.'

That one mind can obtain undue influence over another is now generally admitted, and we need not go to the spirit world for instances of such domination—they are common enough in this world if we have eyes to see. The very 'copy-book' maxims of our youth indicate the fact—'Evil communications corrupt good morals'; 'A man is known by the company he keeps,' &c. The successful salesman or commercial traveller frequently exercises this hypnotic influence quite unconsciously and legitimately; while the 'confidence trick' man, who fleeces his unwary victim, illegitimately employs the same power. They both soothe and surprise their subjects, gaining their consent before they can realise the situation, and, being aroused, become positive enough to exercise their will power in opposition. Many a marriage has been solemnised in which one of the contracting parties was fascinated, psychologised, or hypnotised by the dominating influence which was unduly exerted by the other, and much misery might be avoided if young people of both sexes were taught the probability of such experiences and how to guard against being misled.

IS IT DANGEROUS TO DEVELOP MEDIUMSHIP?

The student will sooner or later meet with the objection that it is 'dangerous to seek to develop mediumship.' That there are 'personating, tricky, disorderly, and evil spirits'; and, further, 'as it is difficult to decide when those who communicate are honourable and trustworthy, it is best to leave the whole subject alone.' To this we reply, the same objection may be raised against intercourse with people on this side. Is it not often difficult to decide who among one's acquaint-

ances are honourable and trustworthy? so much so, in fact, that in certain moods one is almost tempted to emulate Diogenes, and set out to hunt for an honest man! But we have to take people as they are, and try to understand them, and then we realise that most of them are good, well-meaning, and sincere. Everyone has his limitations, and 'to err is human'; but when we 'try the spirits' (embodied), we generally find that they are not as black as their enemies paint them, nor as white as their admirers depict them. In other words, they are *human* beings. If we deal with spirit people in the same natural and sensible way, and treat them as we do the people we meet with here, we learn that though some of them are thoughtless, mischievous, and, at times, pretentious, the majority of those who manifest their presence differ very little from the people who live around us on this side.

THE LAW OF ATTRACTION.

Spirits are attracted to those persons with whom they can establish sympathetic relations upon either the physical, affectional, or psychical planes. Although animated by the best intentions, it is possible for them to injuriously affect those whom they love. In their extreme anxiety to make their presence known, and to console their loved ones, they may attach themselves too closely to those who are susceptible to their influence, and cause the sensitives to experience sensations which may be mistakenly regarded as injurious.

SPIRITS OFTEN UNJUSTLY BLAMED.

It does not follow that because a sensitive shakes and feels peculiar sensations and impulses, that these phenomena are of necessity due to the operations of excarnate intelligences. Very much that is attributed to the influence of obsessing spirits may be explained upon purely physiological grounds.

Many people do not understand, and are not prepared for, the natural cravings and demands which inevitably arise

within them, and they suffer great distress of mind in consequence of their ignorance regarding their own personality. Sensitives are apt to regard these inclinations and tendencies as due to the influence of the devil; or, if they have learnt a little of mediumship, they find a scapegoat in 'obsessing spirits,' instead of studying human physiology. Furthermore, in the early stages of their development mediums generally experience strange feelings and much mental and nervous excitement. The unusual activity and the curious sensations that are induced by the influence of the spirits upon them, together with the element of uncertainty, not unmixed with fear, consequent upon the newness of the stirrings and impulses that are aroused in them, tend to unsettle the sensitives and cause them to imagine that the spirits wish them to do or say things which are in reality due to their own disturbed conditions, and it is necessary that they should guard themselves against becoming too much engrossed or too enthusiastic, lest they should be carried away by their own desires.

It is frequently asserted by non-Spiritualists that mediumship leads to insanity, but experience shows that it more often *saves* people from the lunatic asylum by explaining the nature and causes of their perplexing sensations and teaching them how to acquire self-control.

True mediumship does not consist in abject passivity and self-surrender to a dominating mind, but it involves the cultivation of the spiritual faculties and the exaltation of the consciousness until the sensitive acquires the positive power to receive or reject impressions or influences that may impinge upon his psychic nature.

The strong yearnings experienced by the bereaved who sigh

> 'For the touch of a vanished hand
> And the sound of a voice that is still,'

are frequently selfish and tend to hold the departed to the earth-conditions, thus setting up vibrations which may prove painful alike to the spirit and the mourner.

CULTURE BRINGS PAIN AS WELL AS PLEASURE.

The opening of the avenues of spiritual perception and the quickening of the responsiveness of his inner self to psychic conditions introduce the sensitive into a new realm of impulses, intuitions and experiences. The influences of places and people on this side, as well as on the other, impinge upon him and he grows conscious of sights, sounds, and sensations which he can neither name, account for, nor interpret. Like an Æolian harp, that is stirred by passing vibrations, he may be responsive to the breath of love, or the gust of hate, the breeze of pure desire or the storm of passion. These subtle 'sensings,' and their registration in his psychic consciousness, sometimes disturb, perplex, and annoy him, and in the rough and ready way of finding an easy solution for difficult problems, he attributes them to evil spirits, but does not explain them nor truly interpret their significance.

The training of the eye and ear to distinguish the shades of colour and the nice gradations in sound, and the cultivation of the artistic power of attention to, and appreciation of, harmony, necessarily lay the individual open to the liability of being painfully affected by discords and inharmonies. The sensitive may expect to have to pay the same penalty for his development until he learns how to become master of his powers and inhibit all discords; to shut off, and out, those 'suggestions' and influences which rasp and injure him, while he invites those which are congenial and spiritually beneficial.

CAST OUT ALL FEAR-THOUGHTS.

Fear hath torments, and the dread of the unknown is a sign of weakness born of ignorance. When we hold aloft the lamp of knowledge we fearlessly tread the path. Spectres grim and devils dark disappear when we can see the realities of the spirit. Fear has caused many poor souls to conjure up phantoms with which they have tortured themselves, cringing in terror where they should have been bold and confident. Traditional theology with its Satan and his emissaries has been respon-

sible for a great deal of the insanity and for many of the hysterical hallucinations under which so many sufferers have broken down; and there is danger, unless they guard themselves against the error, that unthinking and irrational people who dabble with Spiritualism will transfer their fear of the Devil to fear of obsessing evil spirits.

To one lady who had an idea that a living person had exerted an evil influence over her, but who subsequently discovered that she was mistaken, and then attributed her feelings to an *ex*carnate individual, we felt constrained to point out that, while it was *possible* that a spirit was influencing her, she had, by her ignorance and her fears, attached too much importance to the sensations she experienced, and had imagined that they were far worse and more uncommon than they really were. She had, in fact, given a dominating *suggestion* to herself, and, while anxious for relief, she confessed by her *fears* what she denied with her words. She thus perpetuated the very conditions she deplored, and intensified her own sufferings. Victims of auto-suggestion are seldom in the condition of body or mind to understand their feelings, or to rise superior to the conditions that they have induced. If they could only see their folly, and realise how weak of will and infirm in purpose and principle they have been, they would speedily overcome their infatuation. But they think about and dilate upon their trouble, their feelings, their danger, and crave the sympathy of their friends, until 'trifles light as air' assume great importance, and purely natural subjective states are regarded as evidences of the malignant purpose of an unseen enemy.

NOT EVIL BECAUSE IMPERFECT.

We have elsewhere pointed out that many difficulties have to be surmounted on both sides before clear and definite intercourse with spirit people can be enjoyed, and therefore allowance must be made for mistakes, failures, and misunderstandings. Imperfect or inaccurate communications are not

evil, nor the work of obsessing spirits or devils. It is so easy to misunderstand when both parties are groping in the dark that the wonder is, not that we get so few good and true messages, but that we get so many!

The intelligent study by mediums of the laws of association and of the conditions of mediumship will lead to a more enlightened exercise of the powers of will by which they can hold themselves free from all influences except those to which they desire to yield.

It will be helpful to remember that spirits do not oust a man from his own body and take possession of his brain and personality, to use or abuse it at their own will and pleasure, whether he is agreeable or not. On the contrary, spirit influence is exerted upon a sensitive in the same manner as the mesmerist or hypnotist operates upon his subject; and while unthinking persons may heedlessly welcome any kind of influence in their eager desire to become mediums, and thus run the risk of being acted upon by undesirable spirits, they have the power to break all such associations if they are determined to gain their freedom.

IMPERSONATING SPIRITS.

That there are spirits who sometimes 'impersonate,' and seek to pass themselves off as, the friends of the sitters, we have had proof on several occasions; but they invariably get 'bowled out' if the investigators are observant and careful, and they are by no means as numerous or as evilly disposed as some people imagine. That there are spirits who 'play up' to the weaknesses and flatter the vanity of those to whom they communicate; that they give glowing assurances of the good things that they will perform by-and-bye, and profess to be some of the 'great ones' of the past, is equally true. 'People dearly love a lord,' and this amiable weakness is fully realised by the jokers on 'the other side'—but the fault does not wholly rest with them! Their too-confiding subjects are in the main responsible for their own mystification and mis-

leading. They are so anxious to be guided by some 'eminent' person who will be to them an 'authority,' that they practically invite pretenders who 'fool them to the top of their bent.' This does not apply to all cases of real or supposed deception, but it does cover a large proportion of such experiences. In many instances there is an element of self-deception—or auto-suggestion—'the wish becomes father to the thought,' and the sensitive's unrestrained imaginative powers do the rest. There are many persons outside of Spiritualism who believe that they are in direct communication with God, while others are equally as sincere and earnest in their belief that the agents of the Devil are continually tempting them—is it any wonder, then, that when unbalanced people investigate Spiritualism they should go to similar extremes?

SPONTANEOUS MEDIUMSHIP NOT UNDERSTOOD.

Sensitives sometimes hear unpleasant 'voices,' which medical men are apt to regard as purely subjective or imaginary—but they *may* be truly voices—those of spirit people—as spontaneous or natural clairaudience is quite as probable as natural clairvoyance or psychometry. It may be that the inner hearing has been opened upon the lower plane of the thought-conditions of the soul realm, and the sensitive hears expressions, or senses the repulsive thoughts, that distress him, somewhat as one might be shocked by hearing the objectionable language of the *habitués* of a low public-house, or by the vulgar and brutal expressions of a group of coarse and ignorant men when passing them in the street. There would not necessarily be any intention to offend, under such circumstances, as those people would simply be speaking in their accustomed manner. In the same way it is probable that the spirits whose voices and thoughts produce unpleasant effects upon sensitives may be unconscious of the fact that they are overheard; or may not know how to move away from them, any more than the sensitives know how to close their psychic nature so as

to become unconscious of, and unresponsive to, unwelcome companions.

CONDITIONS AND CAUSES OF OBSESSION.

The conditions and causes which lead up to real or supposed obsession may be summed up as follows:—

Temporary association; such as living in a haunted house or in companionship with people of a low moral tone, and being, perhaps unconsciously, subject to 'suggestions' from them.

Nervous exhaustion and psychical depletion, resulting from too frequent and prolonged 'sittings' and promiscuous séances where inharmonious conditions prevail.

Mental concentration by excited and continuous thought about the one subject to the exclusion of others; and indiscriminate self-surrender to 'control' in the anxiety to become a medium.

Unrestrained imagination; the morbid pessimism which follows upon intense grief; or other 'shocks' which cause mental strain, hysteria, or melancholia, or both.

Auto-suggestion resulting from fear and due to the misinterpretation of sensations and impulses which may be accounted for on purely physiological grounds.

Diseased or unbalanced conditions of body or mind; or personal habits which make excessive drain upon the vital energies and lower the moral tone of the sensitive.

We do not deny that spirits may, and sometimes do, dominate an individual, but we feel assured that in the majority of such cases, where the control obtains the mastery, there is some weakness or disease; some point of contact and similarity between the spirit and the physical, mental, moral, or psychical conditions of the sensitive.* Those associations,

* Hudson Tuttle holds that 'a deficiency of will power, induced by physical conditions, rather than mental, has been the immediate cause of what is called obsession, in varying degrees from a slight inclination to complete loss of self-control. . . Unless the gateway is open, such influences cannot enter. Known or unknown, there is a weak point of attack, a physical state, more or less diseased, reflected on the mind, and making it plastic to impressions received through the lower nature.'

however, in which the disposition and purpose of the spirit may be called evil or malevolent are rare; and the instances in which the obsessing spirit cannot be reached by benevolent sympathies and services on the part of the sitters and the sensitive are still more rare! In our experience we have found that in the few cases where badly-disposed spirits were *really* at work, they came to gratify their spite, to mislead for revenge, or to 'get even' because of some injury or fancied slight.

SPIRITS SOMETIMES PERSISTENT, BUT NOT MALICIOUS.

Spirits are sometimes very persistent. Having found someone who is sensitive, through whom they think they can reach their friends, they persevere in the most determined fashion, in spite of the objections and fears of the subject. Perhaps they are penitent, anxious to confess their faults, or follies, and to obtain forgiveness. Or they desire to convince their friends of their presence and console them, and, with such intentions in their minds, they, with a pertinacity that is distinctly human, but often very disagreeable, fasten on to the medium and will give him no rest. Then again, when spirits who have had little or no experience seek to control sensitives, they often exert too much influence. They transfer their own conditions and desires too strongly, and, in their anxiety, fail to realise that they are acting unkindly or prejudicially towards their instruments. Further, as 'first control experiences' are frequently of the nature of 'impersonations,' the sensitive who is overshadowed in that way by the memory-sphere of an unhappy, conscience-stricken soul may be excused if he rebels against such influences and misunderstands their purport. Still, distressed sensitives have frequently obtained relief by a temporary surrender to the wishes of the control in the presence of experienced observers.

By thus ascertaining the object of the spirit; by reasoning with him; by appealing to his sympathy; and by instructing

him as regards the nature of the effects he has produced upon the medium and how to proceed in future, so as to secure happier results, intelligent and observant sitters can frequently relieve the sensitive from all fear; benefit the spirit; and themselves obtain experiences of a very educational character.

Many mediums can to-day number among their most faithful and helpful friends in spirit life those who at first were rough, overmastering, and apparently obsessing and undesirable controls; but who, by kindness and love, were assisted and educated and afterwards became useful and trustworthy friends and co-workers.

THREE COURSES OF TREATMENT.

When it is evident that a sensitive is under the influence of a spirit who either cannot or will not withdraw from the association, there is no reason for perturbation on the part of the medium or his friends. There are, as we have indicated, three courses open to them in dealing with such a case—

1st. Try to ascertain who the spirit is, what he wishes to do, and why he persists in exercising his control over the medium. Talk to him kindly, help him, reason with him, pray for and with him, carry out his wishes as far as they are reasonable, and enlighten him to the best of your ability.

2nd. Invoke the assistance of strong, helpful, healing spirits, and call in a healer who is also a clairvoyant, or a medium who possesses the power to deal with undeveloped spirits, and build up the physical strength and the psychic nature of the sensitive and encourage him to resist and break the 'spell' that has been thrown over him.

3rd. This is the most important course, because it must be followed to some extent in any case, and is the one which we have already emphasised, viz., the medium must, by determined and persistent effort of will and spiritual aspiration, learn how to be confident, and *possess himself*, and *refuse* to be held in psychological captivity by, or be made the sport and

plaything of, unseen beings. He should not surrender to the idea that he is 'obsessed'; or discuss the subject too freely with others, or weakly seek the sympathy and condolences of his friends, as all such admissions and recognitions tend to strengthen the impression that he is a captive and powerless to resist. He should not go to this, that, and the other person for advice and 'cure'—the *power* to overcome is *within*. 'I *can* and I *will* be free' should be his affirmation, strongly felt and boldly proclaimed, and then he will speedily say '*I am free*,' and know that it is true.

As distance on the spirit side is more a matter of *state* than geography, the psychic must strive to attain a higher degree of lucidity—to get away from the plane of haunting, vicious, earthy or vindictive spirit people by rising above it, so as to be unaffected by those denser vibrations and respond to the more subtle and spiritual forces. The purpose of development can best be served when the sensitive, by sincere thought and earnest aspiration, prepares himself for the highest and purest baptisms of spiritual illumination and learns to inflexibly hold himself independent of all conditions save those to which he voluntarily opens his consciousness for wise guidance.

TO THE PURE ALL THINGS ARE PURE.

Very much depends upon the objects entertained by the medium and the sitters, as also upon the character and intentions of the spirit who seeks to manifest his presence; but, on general lines, where people of average intelligence and rectitude seek communion with those they have known and esteemed, or loved, the results are almost invariably beneficial. There is every reason why this should be so if the common-sense precautions are observed of keeping a level head, exercising patience, exhibiting unselfishness and sincerity, and desiring good spiritual counsel and fellowship. The rational course to follow is assuredly that of avoiding the extremes alike of credulity and sceptical incredulity, but letting the spirits do their best and then collating the facts

observed and drawing conclusions. Care, patience and perseverance will save both mediums and inquirers from many misconceptions and enable them to avoid the errors of others. Above all, mediums should observe their own feelings, study their own experiences, try to understand and co-operate with the spirits, but never yield servile or slavish service, nor permit themselves to be swayed by flattery nor dominated by any spirit (in the circle or on the spirit side) who claims obedience, poses as an 'authority,' or refuses to recognise the rights of others.

ADVICE TO THE SENSITIVE.

Do not *expect* that you will be influenced by a low class of spirit people, either on this side or the other; neither should you *fear* any such contingency, as by so doing you will go half-way to meet the very danger you dread—but, in case it should happen, it is well that you should know what to do to close the avenues of your psychic self to any such unwelcome intrusions. By brooding, introspective, sorrowful and self-pitying fear-thought, people become morbid and unbalanced. Do not give way to any such tendencies. We do not go about in terror of our lives because we know that there are scoundrels in this world—why, then, should you be cowardly and afraid because there are fools, frauds, and pretenders 'over there'? Remember that spirits *cannot make* you do anything against your determined will.

Keep body and mind pure and healthy and control your thoughts. '*Fear* makes cowards of us all'—the remedy is *knowledge* and pure purpose. You can overcome weakness and evil thoughts by substituting good *strong* thoughts; by cultivating an affirmative and positive mental attitude and by rising to a higher spiritual plane.

When you know that, by the exercise of your own will, you can control your psychic conditions and become soul-centred so as to prevent any unwelcome or uncongenial influence affecting you to your injury, you need have no fear.

Like seeks like as a rule. But if, owing to inharmonious surroundings, or unspiritual sitters, or temporary weakness of body, or lack of watchfulness, you should become subject to the dominating thoughts of any spirit, in or out of the body, that are calculated to lower your tone, remember—you have but to be determined, and call upon your own governing will forces, to be positive and repel all such influences.

A GOSPEL OF GLADNESS, GOODNESS, AND CHEER.

Spiritualism is a gospel of *glad* tidings, and it should lift you above the mists of superstition and fear into the serener air of spiritual self-confidence, of faith in your own divine nature, and joyous self-possession. Obsessing influences cannot reach you or hold you when your soul is thrilling with delight and your mind is fully engaged in optimistic work for the good of humanity.

The path of mediumship is not an easy one to tread. Do not foolishly imagine that it will lead to the acquisition of knowledge, without effort and experience. It is not 'spiritual attainment made easy,' whereby the indolent can, by a species of substitution, wear the robes of righteousness and display the graces of exalted 'guides' in lieu of their own. It is not to be expected that the great and good souls of the higher life will have fellowship with the ignorant and frivolous, and be content to express their ideas through instruments who do not make earnest and persistent endeavours to render themselves fit for the service of such sweet and enlightened souls.

Forget *yourself*. Think, live, and find your joy in serving others. In the altruistic atmosphere, where self is forgotten, love and goodness are supreme. What are *your* woes and sufferings compared with those of the mourners and the world's burden-bearers? In helping *them* you will gain freedom.

CHAPTER VII.

SOME IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS.

Modern Spiritualism came as a reaction against materialism, and the single idea which gave it birth was that ghosts or spirits were individualised entities subject to law. It is distinguished from the ancient by its sweeping claim that all spiritual phenomena and the evolution and existence of spirits are by the operation of fixed and ascertainable laws.—HUDSON TUTTLE.

The evidences of the presence, power, and identity of the people we call dead have accumulated to such an extent that no really well-informed person will think of denying that under certain favourable conditions intercourse can be carried on between the people of earth and those of the after-death spheres of being.—B. G. E.

THERE is no need for us to give directions for séances for the various physical phenomena, such as slate-writing, spirit photography, direct voices, materialisations, &c., because those mediums who possess the psycho-physical qualifications for these demonstrations almost invariably elaborate strong and abundant psychic force by means of which the spirits themselves can give instructions (by raps, table tiltings, or in writing) how the séances are to be conducted. They alone know what conditions they require; they alone can select and place the sitters and generally arrange matters, and, beyond providing the slates, cabinet, camera, and slides, or writing materials, very little can be done by the sitters or the medium, unless the latter acts upon such impressions as he may receive.

Mediums for physical demonstrations are sometimes entranced, but it is not always necessary, and many of the most successful who were put under control during the early days of their mediumship afterwards remained conscious

during their séances. This is also true of many public speakers. As a general rule excellence is attained in one direction, and it is advisable to find out what the spirits can do best through each medium, and let other forms of manifestation be supplementary.

We fully recognise the immense importance of the phenomena which demonstrate the continued existence of human beings, and prove the reality of our faith in a future life, and we only wish that they could be multiplied a thousand fold.

It is impossible for a medium, or for the spirits, to satisfy *all* the whims and demands of sceptical and cynical sitters, or to gratify the wishes of those who are always on the look-out for 'something new and strange.' They cannot produce phenomena on demand; or turn on the tap and let the forces flow like water.

It is probable that the inveterate sceptic loses more than he gains by maintaining an attitude of rigid unbelief, which well-nigh invariably leads to cynical and critical habits of thought which bias the judgment, poison the mind, and erect impassable barriers that shut out the spirits. The sceptical habit causes men to mistrust others, and weakens their faith in their own ability to observe and decide; or it leads to an opinionated, egotistical self-complacency which cannot be pierced by truth. On the other hand, sympathy and open-mindedness invite confidence and establish communion.

It is as unreasonable to accept, without the most convincing demonstrations of their accuracy, the asserted 'explanations' of the facts of mediumship put forward by non-Spiritualists (which explain too much and depend upon 'authorities' rather than facts) as it is to accept the spiritualistic claim; but when we remember that men like Crookes, Wallace, Hodgson, and Myers have been literally driven to accept the spiritualistic position, by the weight of the evidence, we can justly claim that it is wisest and most reasonable to maintain, not only a 'mind to let,' but an

attitude of hospitality towards the spirits, for we are much more likely to 'entertain angels' if we invite them with kindly thoughts than if we try to quarantine them and put them through a critical cross-examination. The credulity of the incredulous sceptic is often greater than that of the 'believer,' and is, to say the least, equally as unscientific and unwise!

Only their sincere love for the truth and their desire to be of service to others can sustain the workers under the constant suspicion of fraud (if not the direct charges of trickery) which so many have had to endure.

PROGRESSIVE DEVELOPMENTS.

After the sitters in a circle have had physical phenomena for some time, the power for the production of that class of manifestation will probably be exhausted, and unless some new sitters are introduced the more interior and subtle psychical forces of the medium and the members of the circle may be drawn upon for more mental modes of intercourse.

Mrs. Britten, in her magazine, 'The Unseen Universe,' said that in early girlhood she was a very susceptible magnetic subject, and continued: 'By a party of eminent occultists who held strictly private—or, I might say, secret—circles for investigation, I was frequently invited, with other young persons, to become a subject for the magnetic operations of inquirers. In my own case I was never rendered wholly unconscious by the will of the magnetisers, though nearly all the rest of the subjects they experimented with were made so. I believe now that the difference between the partial and total unconsciousness of the various subjects of these occult séances corresponded to the different degrees of entrancement which we who are platform speakers experience. I realise that on the spiritual rostrum I am two distinct persons. I can go on speaking aloud, yet thinking of quite other matters, and when I can fix my mind on what I utter I have listened with a sense of strangeness, which brings conviction, to *my* mind, at least, that I am not the individual who

originates the thoughts expressed, although they are undoubtedly shaped by the organism and lingual capabilities through which they are transmitted. From this state of what I may call waking trance, up to the somnambulic sleep in which the spirit's ideas are expressed automatically, I have observed many gradations, ranging, as above observed, from semi-consciousness to the deep somnambulic sleep. There is one striking difference, however, between the entrancement induced by human and spiritual magnetism. The former is much stronger, more direct, and, in general, may be considered as being a much coarser, or more material, element than the latter. Human magnetic control annihilates individuality, and even identity, for the time being, and substitutes the sensuous perceptions of the magnetiser in place of those of the subject. "A good magnetic subject" is helplessly in the power of the magnetiser, unless that subject passes away from the human to a spiritual control, when that of the human operator is at once lost. This was constantly my own case, and thus I, and others similarly influenced, have come to the conclusion that the spiritual control is more subtle, finer, and—except in the case of obsession by evil spirits—far purer. Mediums, when once they have become such, are scarcely ever susceptible again to human magnetism. To avoid any such possibility, I have always been strictly charged by spirit friends never to submit to be magnetised by human operators, and when preparing for the spiritual rostrum to wear *silk*, and avoid as much as possible conversation or contact with those around me.'

Replying to a question as to how spirits control their mediums, 'Tien,' the guide of Mr. J. J. Morse, said: 'There is an effort to gradually subdue the normal nervous activities of the body to a state of rest and quiescence. This induces a heavy, depressing, drowsy kind of feeling, a lethargy stealing over the bodily functions, until one by one all the activities of the body still themselves and come to rest. They seem to do this to the consciousness of the individual sub-

jected to the experiment. This quietude develops into a state of sleep, wherein the positive actions of the vital functions are turned inwardly, instead of being allowed to express themselves outwardly as in waking activity. When a complete state of quiescence has been established, in the body itself there is a slow awakening of various nervous centres which are gradually stimulated to a certain amount of activity. This results in a drawing forth, so to speak, of a psychological aura, generated within the sphere of the body itself, which constitutes the bond or link between the medium as subject, and the spirit as operator, and completes the link between the subject's body and the controlling intelligence. When this nervous or psychic link has been created, there is a further effort on the part of the will of the operator to awaken certain ranges of faculties within the mental sphere of the subject. This will be determined exactly by the kind of work to be done by this agency. For this special purpose the superior intellectual faculties are more directly appealed to, agreeing with sublimity, reason, foresight, form, and colour. Then a certain amount of physical energy is liberated as a sort of steam to direct the machinery when the handle is turned. Presently the wheels are set in motion, and mentally there is an awakening of the higher faculties. Spiritually speaking, it is necessary that the spiritual element, the consciousness of the individual—that is himself—shall be held as quiet as possible. In some cases the spirit is withdrawn from the body, though sufficient relation is maintained that the individual may remain a living being. In other cases, where it is not necessary that the spiritual presence should be withdrawn, it is reduced to a state of quiescence. This is absolutely essential, because in proportion to the activity of consciousness in the individual, so are the difficulties of control. It is true, more or less, of all bodily and mental faculties, for just in proportion as the individual resumes sway over any part or parts of his body, just in that proportion is control prevented for the work in hand. Thus, bodily and mentally,

the links are completed that enable us to build up, step by step, the complete result, which is called a "Control."'

When we remember that the more nearly the spirit and medium approach, or resemble each other mentally and morally—the more perfect the psychic sympathy; the more rhythmic the magnetic vibrations—the more successful will be the transferences and inspirations enjoyed by the sensitive, we shall see how difficult it becomes to eliminate the influence of the medium from the results. The character and quality of his psychic sphere must, to a large extent, determine the nature of the manifestations, and where mutual sympathies and aspirations constitute the basis of *rapport*, or union, the blended forces of spirit and sensitive will be so harmonised that it will be well-nigh impossible even for the sensitive to say exactly where he leaves off and where the spirit begins. So long as no definite claim is made that the communications emanate from a given individual in the other state, they can be taken for what they are worth on general grounds, and allowance can be made for the well-known fact that mediums of necessity give a tone and colour to the expressions made through them, just as the character and quality of the instrument affects the music that is produced by its means.

Mediums should remember that self-dissection, intense anxiety, desire for success, are bad conditions, and induce morbid self-consciousness, whereas the aim of the seeker after spirit guidance and soul-unfoldment must be to *forget* self, and, for the time at least, to be regardless of success or failure —neither anxious nor afraid, but absorbed in the process of receiving and transmitting the message. * Just so soon as the sensitive *wants to succeed*, he is liable to lose touch with

* 'When we are anxious or impatient we become intellectually *positive*, and then *exhale* a magnetic atmosphere while we *inhale* the necessary electric emanations which rapidly exhaust the presiding medium, and the communications are thereby deranged, becoming, as many persons have frequently observed, contradictory and confused.'—A. J. Davis, in 'The Philosophy of Spiritual Intercourse.'

the spirit, his own mind begins to work, and his own thoughts may be mixed up with those of the control, and confusion result.

SHOULD MEDIUMS BE PAID?

There are, unfortunately, very few developed mediums compared with the hosts of inquirers. There are too few 'home circles' for the cultivation of mediumship for friendly intercourse with relatives and loved ones; and the tests sought from professional mediums are too often of a business or personal character instead of such evidences of identity as might be expected during an hour's sweet interchange of thoughts. It is generally felt that mediums should earn their livelihood and devote only their few hours of leisure to the study and cultivation of their mediumship, and yet they are expected, with spent forces and tired brains, to be well-tuned instruments for spirits to operate upon! Strong prejudices are felt by many people against 'paid mediums,' but we cannot see why! If the medium is sincere and earnest; if he devotes his time and energies to the service of his clients; if he is not a mere 'hireling' (working for a fee), but one who *loves* his work and desires to do good, why should he not be paid, and well-paid, too, so that he may be above the financial disturbances which would unfit him for his office?

Those who think mediumship too sacred for everyday life should do with mediums as the ancients did with their oracles —keep them, and surround them with good, true, and happy conditions. Until that is done, and mediums are lifted out of the turmoil where they have to earn their daily bread, it must be manifest to unprejudiced people that if they devote their strength and service to the work, they are worthy of support. To those of our fellow-sensitives who feel the 'call of the spirit' to go forth and preach the gospel, heal the sick, and comfort the bereaved, we would say, 'Magnify your office; do your utmost to perfect your powers; try to make progress and render yourself fit for the work you have to do, that it may

be well and worthily performed; aim at the "highest and the best."'

To be a successful public medium you will need to *live* for it, and devote your time and thought to the duties of your office just the same as does the artist, author, lawyer, doctor, and preacher, and, like them, you are justified in living *by* it.

All experience goes to show that mediumship should be sought for the good that it can do in many ways when unselfishly used, and those who possess it should seek to improve and perfect it by studying and obeying its laws, and by earnest self-culture, physically, morally and spiritually. *Be* good, so as to *get* good, with which to *do* good.

True mediumship leads to the development of a strong character; to healthy, harmonious and rational manhood and womanhood; and true sensitiveness leads to sensibility and to a rational, intelligent, and religious life. Nothing of real value can be obtained without effort or costly sacrifice. But is not the attainment of communion with wise and loving spirits an adequate inducement to you, apart from the pleasure incidental to the progressive harmonisation of both mind and body?

There is, we believe, a continual influx from the other side. Many people, who are externally oblivious of the fact, are undoubtedly frequently *im*pelled and *com*pelled to certain courses of conduct by spirits. Artistic, sensitive persons—teachers, preachers, authors, composers, inventors—aye, most people who feel and see and are *awake* on the interior side of their nature—are the instruments for expressing the thoughts and purposes of inspirers from the spirit side to an extent which will astonish most of us when we learn the truth 'over there.'

It is, perhaps, only our density and our unconsciously materialistic modes of thought that make it necessary for us to require 'control,' and demand sensuous or other 'test' evidences of the association and influence of spirit people. Spirit speaks to spirit, and true 'spirit-communion' (or community of feeling and purpose, thought and desire) has yet to

be achieved. Some few sweet, serene, spiritually-minded souls have possibly entered into this realm, but the bulk of the race are still on the exterior, and are largely children of the senses rather than the spirit. We shall, however, deal with the voluntary and personal cultivation of psychic powers in the concluding portion of this work (Part III.), to which we refer the reader. There is no need to extol mediumship at the expense of psychical self-development, or to uphold personal and conscious unfoldment and depreciate mediumistic culture, for the one frequently leads to, and merges into, the other.

THE SPIRITUALISM OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

The great distinctive feature which will differentiate the Spiritualism of the twentieth century from that of the past fifty years will be this very change of attitude. Instead of living in the basement of the sense-self, the coming man and woman will naturally ascend to the psychic plane and throw wide the windows that open heavenward. The thoughts of welcome having overcome the feelings of fear, the visitants from the spirit realms will naturally find readier means of reaching the soul-consciousness of sensitives and of transmitting through them fuller evidences of their intelligence and identity than was possible in the old days.

The right 'attitude' is beautifully expressed in the lines—

'Lie open, Soul! the great, the wise
About thy portal throng;
The wealth of souls before thee lies,
Their gifts to thee belong.
Lie open, Soul! the angels wise
Will inspirations give:
Oh, let your aspirations rise,
That rightly you may live.'

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A GUIDE TO MEDIUMSHIP,

AND PSYCHICAL UNFOLDMENT.

BY

E. W. AND M. H. WALLIS.

IN THREE PARTS.

PART III.

PSYCHICAL SELF-CULTURE.

'That serene and blessed mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on,—
Until the breath of this corporeal frame,
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul;
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things.'

—WORDSWORTH.

MAN'S POSSIBILITIES.

'There is no summit you may not attain,
No purpose which you may not yet achieve,
If you will wait serenely, and believe
Each seeming loss is but a step toward gain.

Between the mountain tops lie vale and plain ;
Let nothing make you question, doubt or grieve ;
Give only good, and good alone receive ;
And as you welcome joy, so welcome pain.

That which you most desire awaits your word ;
Throw wide the door and bid it enter in.
Speak, and the strong vibrations shall be stirred ;
Speak, and above earth's loud, unmeaning din
Your silent declarations shall be heard.
All things are possible to God's own kin.'

—Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

INTRODUCTION.

THE preceding Parts of this Guide were devoted almost exclusively to the consideration of the development of sensitiveness under the influence and guidance of spirit people.

We now address those who desire to cultivate susceptibility to psychical conditions and to consciously realise their relations to the great unseen realm of 'principalities and powers.' As self-knowledge, self-reliance, self-mastery, and self-expression are all involved in psychical self-culture, the powers of concentration and psychical penetration, insight, and conscious cognition should not be sought for the gratification of curiosity or for the purpose of money-making. No really permanent spiritual development can be attained by merely experimenting in thought-transference, psychometry, and clairvoyance; but persevering effort to reach the 'superior condition' of lucidity will be helpful to those who sincerely aspire for spiritual illumination and the opening up of their inner powers of perception.

Between the animals and the angels we face two worlds, and may grovel or grow, sink or soar, according to our attitude and desires. We find what we seek, and in so doing reveal ourselves. Our estimate of our nature and powers is exemplified in our character. With confidence, hope, and love in our hearts we look upwards, find good everywhere, and press forward with deep convictions and overcoming will. But he who doubts, worries and mistrusts, dwells in gloom; he glances downwards, trembles, and loses faith in himself. How true it is that 'as a man thinks in his heart so is he.'

We have set down our best thoughts and have incorporated those which have come to us from our spirit preceptors. We have laid many writers under contribution for helpful advice and suggestions, and we commend this work to the kindly and thoughtful consideration of all who seek for spiritual self-knowledge and self-possession.

To the extent that the reader is assisted to be strong, self-reliant, optimistic and affirmative—a radiant centre of psychical force of health and cheer—and by his example exerts an influence for good as a result of his spiritual unfolding and altruistic service to humanity, our purpose will be fulfilled.

E. W. AND M. H. WALLIS.

PART III.

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PART III.

PSYCHICAL SELF-CULTURE.

CHAPTER I.

THE SOUL AND ITS POWERS.

We must not for a moment forget that man is a spirit, differing only from the spirit after the death of the body, by the necessities and limitations of its physical connection. As such, it is capable within such limitations of manifesting the phenomena of spirit.—HUDSON TUTTLE.

Let all who will, learn that they themselves are the repositories of all force, and that wisdom may convert that force into power, the first use of which is to render themselves self-governing and symmetrical.—B. G. E.

THE tendency towards the materialistic interpretation of the phenomena of life and consciousness, which seemed likely to carry all before it some fifty years ago, has been checked, in a large measure, we believe, as the result of the persistent recurrence of the phenomena associated with mediumship, and physical scientists are turning their attention with increasing success to the exploration of the unseen realm of force that exists behind what we call matter.

In his Presidential address at the meeting of the British Association of Science at Bristol, in 1898, Sir William Crookes stated that he would like to reverse the famous apothegm of his predecessor, Professor Tyndal (who said that he 'found in matter the promise and potency of every

form of terrestrial life'), and say instead, '*In Life I see the promise and potency of all forms of matter*,' and this may be taken to fairly represent the change of attitude from that of the materialist to that of the philosophical Spiritualist.

LIFE THE ORGANISER.

The word Life is frequently used synonymously with spirit, and thinkers are beginning to realise that all positive, creative, or organising force is Spirit; that, in fact, Life is Spirit in operation; living forms are organised life. Bodies do not beget Spirit, but are the results of the activities of Spirit. Thus all formative power is spiritual. Life acts from within outwards. The kingdom of power, possibility, and realisation (of Heaven) is within.

The people of the religious world are being caught in the prevailing thought-currents which are impelling them onward to the recognition of the spiritual nature of man and the immanence of the Spirit of the universe. Thus the materialists, literalists, and formalists are all being carried behind the veil of the seen to the realm of the real, and the old mechanical methods of interpretation of the phenomena of Nature and of consciousness—of manifestation and of expression—are being rapidly revolutionised.

MAN A TRIUNE BEING.

By their phenomenal manifestations spirit people have demonstrated that man is a spirit, acting upon, and functioning through, the physical brain and body by means of the intermediate agency of a spiritual body, or psychical organism—sometimes denominated the 'astral body.' While the physical form is a microcosm, containing, representatively, all the forces and substances of the world to which it belongs, the spiritual body—or soul—is the vitalising arch-typal form which preserves the integrity of the outer organism in spite of the disintegration and renewal which are continually transpiring in its constituent elements.

The spirit (Ego) is the real self—the centre of consciousness, power, thought, and emotion—an Intelligence, becoming aware of its own nature and powers but always above its own comprehension.

The soul, or the spirit's body, has frequently been seen by clairvoyants, and has been described as 'the counterpart of, or a silver lining to, the physical form.' It is the agent immediately employed by the spirit in all reception of sensations from, and the expression of its thoughts, feelings, and purposes on, the outer plane.

M. Gabriel Delanne uses the term 'perisprit' to indicate this inner organism, which, he says, is composed of matter more rarefied than ether. . . 'The existence of this perisprit,—of this double of the body, was known to the Greeks, who called it *Eidolon;* to St. Paul, who called it "the spiritual body"; to the Egyptians, who named it *Ka* or *Bai*, and to the alchemists and others. . . The perisprit is the model of the body, and contains the immutable design of every part of the organism; . . the nervous force being precisely the intermediary by which the sensations act upon the perisprit. . . To-day, science has established an intimate, an absolute co-relation between physiology and psychology and Spiritualism, and by demonstrating the existence of the perisprit, has shed an intense light on the problem of the soul. Thanks to this imponderable fluidic envelope, all recollections are fixed in this imperishable body.'

SPIRIT AND SOUL.

The terms spirit and soul are frequently used interchangeably by theologians to designate the inner individual who survives physical death, but as Mr. St. George Stock says, 'The trichotomy, in the ascending order of body, soul, and spirit, is the genuine doctrine of Spiritualism.' He also states that 'the word "soul" was employed by our translators of the Bible to render ψυχή; the word "spirit" being reserved for the Greek πνεῦμα, with which it is synonymous. There can be

no doubt about the sense of the words in Christian psychology'; and Mr. Desmond G. Fitz-Gerald has quoted a very apt passage from Justin Martyr: 'The body is the house of the soul, and the soul is the house of the spirit.'*

Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace affirms that 'Spiritualism shows us that mind may exist without brain (physical) and disconnected from any material body that we can detect.'

Psychical phenomena demonstrate the existence of the interior subtile body, with its own avenues of consciousness and expression, which not only exists apart from the physical body after death, but is present and active within that body, and show that under certain conditions it may be liberated and employ its faculties so as to see sights and hear sounds; aye, feel, taste, and smell things which escape the physical senses, and which, but for these powers of direct perception by the spiritual consciousness, would remain unknown and practically non-existent.

PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL.

The employment of the words 'physical' and 'spiritual,' as though they were antithetical, is misleading. This is equally true as regards the terms 'Materialism' and 'Spiritualism'—for matter and spirit are not opposites, nor are they foes, and these 'isms' are merely the attempts of thinkers to elucidate the facts of existence as they appeal to their consciousness. There is truth in both; but when either 'ism' is advocated as covering the whole ground, to the exclusion of the other, trouble begins.

We may safely claim that matter is—but *what* it is has yet to be ascertained; still, for all practical purposes, we

* Andrew Jackson Davis says: 'Spirit is all in all, and is not subject to imperfection or disease; Soul, the intermedial reservoir of psychical potencies, is subject to ethers, fluids, foods, time, space, motion, temperature, temptation, disorder, disease, and the change termed death; the body, the outermost material garment, evolved from the soul-elements, is subject by induction to each and every condition and alteration which is natural to and inseparable from the soul—in this rudimental sphere.'

know it by its phenomena, and it is real enough to us; let us not, however, mistake our impressions and sensations regarding it for the absolute truth. 'The fundamental basis of all occult science,' says a thoughtful writer, 'is that there is but one essence, and that all things—concrete matter in its various manifestations, force, thought, and spirit—are but different forms of this cosmic matter, the difference consisting in the distance separating the molecules and in their arrangement.'

MATTER AND MIND.

Some metaphysicians tell us that there is no such thing as matter, all is mind, or Spirit. From one point of view that may be perfectly true; but the body—bones, brawn, blood, brains, breath, and all—is a real existence, for there is a *something* which we *think* we possess and use; a something that answers to our will, and impresses our consciousness—it is therefore, for all practical purposes, a real body, and has to be treated as such. We may know that the colour is not in the rose—all the same we think and speak of roses being red or white, or of some other hue, and we recognise that they exist externally to ourselves. It will be well, therefore, to be on our guard against being carried away by metaphysical subtleties and getting beyond our depth. While we are in this world we must preserve our relations to our environing conditions; it will be time enough for us to spurn them and rise superior to the sense-world—when we have done with it! In the meantime we are *here*, and our problem is, how to make the best use of our powers and opportunities.

SPIRIT THE CAUSE, BODY THE RESULT.

If it be true that all bodies grow as the result of the formative power of the indwelling life which calls them into being and maintains their existence, then our physical organisms may fairly be regarded as 'materialised forms'; more enduring, it is true, than those which are sometimes observed in the séance chamber, but just as certainly manifestations of spirit

power. It follows, therefore, that physical life is a phenomenal expression of spirit, and that *this* is a spirit world—the first stage in our career as conscious entities—and that we are spirits clothed upon with 'forms,' which are vitalised and governed by our soul-forces, more or less consciously and intelligently employed.

This world, then, is a spirit-sphere, its laws and forces are spiritual, and therefore physical and spiritual conditions are but varied aspects of the same facts. Physical and spiritual forces are not antagonistic but complementary: they are not antipathetic but may be regarded as different phases of the one great existence. Viewed from one standpoint, we see the material, viewed from the other we see the spiritual; both views are correct as far as they go, but when we are no longer misled by 'appearances' we recognise that which *is*, and realise the Oneness, Order, and Beauty of Life, as expressed in the diverse modes of manifestation with which we are familiar.

ALL CULTURE REALLY PSYCHICAL.

When we speak of psychical self-culture, then, we must bear in mind that *all* culture is psychical; it is the result of the study, concentration, and use of our natural powers, and involves conscious and persistent effort. There can be no culture without intelligent observation, application, and volition, and as these activities belong to the spirit, the results on all planes—physical, mental, and moral—are due to psychical activity, voluntarily exercised by the individual who desires to know himself and enjoy the fruits of his efforts.

As the spirit is dependent upon the brain and body, through the spiritual organism, for its sensations, the manifestation of its consciousness, the exercise of its powers, and the gratification of its desires on the sensuous plane; the cultivation of the physical body, the preservation of health, and the improvement of organic conditions, will all come under the head of 'psychical self-culture.' For a sound body is

needed through which a sound mind may operate, and physical cleanliness, equally as well as moral purity, is next to godliness. It is well known that the athlete, to secure the best results from his efforts, must put his mind and will into his work, and it is therefore clearly apparent that physical and psychical conditions are so intimately related that they cannot be divorced, and that neither body nor mind can be neglected or misused without injury to both. True self-realisation can only be attained through the healthy development of the instrument through which we have to operate to become conscious of our true nature, and make manifest our interior attributes. We need, therefore, to reverence and use our bodies, not neglect, contemn, or despitefully treat them, for what they are they are, because of, and resulting from, the psychical powers inherent in the Spirit.

DEFINITIONS ARE DANGEROUS.

Definitions which divide and specialise need careful watching. The phrenologist who maps out the brain and feels for bumps, who apportions specific functions to special organs, is not likely to prove a successful character-reader unless he allows for the fact that the mind, as a whole, is expressed through the agency of the brain and body, as a whole. If he does not recognise that there are interacting and reacting influences and conditions, both physical and spiritual, which affect and modify the special, or departmental, processes of the various organs, he will give but a superficial reading of his 'subject.' After all, spiritual states must be spiritually discerned, and he must not only feel bumps and consider physiological processes but sympathetically feel, 'sense,' or intuitively cognise mental and psychical forces and qualities.

'SEVEN SOULS' OR ONE.

For the purposes of analysis and comprehension it may be legitimate to speak of man's 'seven principles,' or 'seven souls' (or even ten or twelve souls), just as we recognise that the

body has its several parts—its bony framework, its muscular, arterial, nervous and other 'systems' and organs, with their respective functions, but these do not and cannot exist and live separately from each other: they are the 'parts' that go to make up the 'whole.' Similarly, we may speak of man's 'selfish animal propensities,' his 'intellectual faculties,' his 'moral and religious sentiments,' but these cannot be separated save for the purposes of argument, or thought, regarding them. Consciousness and intelligence and moral values are involved in them all—the very term *selfish* animal propensities implies the moral standard of judgment. In the same way we hear of people who have 'too much head' and 'too little heart,' and of others who are 'soft-hearted' or 'royal-souled,' and frequently the man of heart or emotion is extolled and the hard-headed, cold-hearted scientist is condemned: but all these emotions, tendencies, and activities are states of consciousness in the individual who expresses them; they are not separate and distinct compartments of his mentality but are inter-related, not independent—consequently, while controversialists and analysts may dispute as to which is best, highest, or most spiritual, we may recognise that they are correlated and that consciousness synthesises all the modes of manifestation by which the Intelligent Operator seeks self-comprehension and self-education by self-expression.

THE PROBLEM OF CONSCIOUSNESS.

The psychological vivisectionist in a similar fashion endeavours to dissect the human consciousness and discourses of 'sub' and 'supra'-liminal consciousness; of the 'subjective' inner as distinguished from the ordinary, everyday 'objective' self-consciousness; and, dealing with the more or less abnormal and fragmentary mental expressions of diseased persons, classifies the aberrations which they present for his observation, and talks freely of 'multiple personalities'; but we need to be on our guard against supposing that the arrested, or broken, expressions of the psychical self of a limited number

of unbalanced people are proofs that the normal man or woman is a congeries of personalities — or distinct individualities.

The well-informed student of Spiritualism is aware of the fact that mediums are frequently controlled by a number of different spirits who display distinct individual characteristics, and he will hardly be prepared to admit that they are merely phases of the multiple personalities of the sensitive that indulge in 'play acting,' and falsely assert themselves to be discarnate human beings. He will naturally ask, if the subconscious self is conscienceless, how does it happen that mesmerists and hypnotists assure us that when their subjects are in the somnambulic state they are more than ordinarily affirmatively moral and reliable, and sternly repel suggestions of an immoral or untruthful character?* He will require clear and convincing proofs before he believes that man is a bundle of personalities, more or less distinct and ignorant of each other's existence, and that the subliminal self, or the supraliminal self, is an unmitigated liar, as he must assuredly be if he is the sole source of communications that purport to be of spirit origin.

EACH ONE LIVES IN HIS OWN WORLD.

The ordinary conscious mind of daily life may be regarded as the sensuous and intellectual consciousness, reinforced and illuminated to some extent by the occasional glimpses it gets of the inner spiritual consciousness. We may live in the animal self, with a good deal of intellectual activity on the external plane, and be almost entirely unaware of our interior psychical consciousness. Not only so, but we always live, in the court of our own individuality, in a world of our own.

* Here is what an American author says on this point: 'Under hypnosis a subject may be made to do things that are ridiculous, absurd, or funny, but never anything that is an absolute detriment to himself, for the subjective mind is always on the alert for the welfare of the individual, and in that state he is more keenly awake to receive impressions for good, and therefore is better guarded than in the waking state.'

No one else can enter into it or understand us, see as we see, feel as we feel, or realise as we do. In fact, we only partially know ourselves. We cannot fully comprehend our own mental, moral, and psychical emotions and desires, and for the most part we have too exclusively devoted time and thought to obtain knowledge of our sensations of external things, and have neglected to cultivate our intuitions and trust the voice of the spirit within. Theodore Parker has well said: 'There are practically four sources of knowledge—direct and indirect, primary and secondary—viz.: Perception for sensible things; Intuition for spiritual things; Reflection for logical things; and Testimony for historical things.'

Professor Loveland says there is a duality of mental action and manifestation which seemingly indicates a duality of persons, but it would be better to say that there is a personal and an impersonal mind—or that there are two sources from which the reason obtains the material for thought formation. The impersonal mind, he says, is the primary, organic homogeneous mind, that knows but does not know that it knows or what it does, and acts automatically: the personal consciousness is the intellectual progressive mind that knows that it knows and is gradually mastering the problem of how it knows. The special is differentiated from the homogeneous, and the primary, or sub consciousness, is impersonal—lacking *self*-consciousness, but ruling the organs and functions of the body; and he affirms that the conscious self is beginning to comprehend and appreciate the other self; the intellect is learning to translate the sensations of the sub-conscious self, which intuitively knows and feels.*

It is true that the range of our understanding of the processes of consciousness is being extended, and we are learning to discriminate and select. We need not respond to the predominant impulses which we experience without realising their source or significance. Still, with the best desire in the

* 'Essay on Mediumship.'

world, even under the most harmonious conditions and circumstances, we cannot give to others the full and true import of our daily inner spiritual life. Our own inmost consciousness is our own, and is incommunicable.

CONSCIOUS CONSCIOUSNESS.

Speaking of the subliminal consciousness, Mr. St. George Lane Fox-Pitt said: 'Broadly, it might be said to include that overshadowing destiny of the individual with all its immense ramifications and affinities, as well as that mere fragment of its potentiality which happened to come under observation on some particular occasion. One function of the subliminal mind was comparable to that of a *reservoir* for the conscious self—to take in and give out memories and influences, increasing the resources and preventing waste of mental effort.' Surely this is but another way of saying that there exists a spirit which is conscious of its own consciousness, and refers to what the Spiritualist has been in the habit of regarding as the 'inner' or 'psychical consciousness,' or what Andrew Jackson Davis calls the 'superior condition.'

The Spirit self receives and unifies all impressions, intuitions, sensations, and presides over the agencies of expression, and therefore the true Spirit consciousness is a unit—a diamond with many facets, so to speak—flashing with and reflecting the light from all sides and from within itself. Horatio Dresser thinks the most plausible theory of the human mind 'is that which regards it as a sub-conscious unit, different aspects of which are called into consciousness during our waking hours, in somnambulism, in hypnosis, in clairvoyance, clairaudience, telepathy, and spiritual illumination.'* We are inclined to think the aspects here referred to are those which belong to the higher or supraliminal, rather than the lower or subliminal states of consciousness—these latter being the

* 'In Search of a Soul.'

more automatic or involuntary processes whereby the normal mind is relieved of the necessity of constantly keeping watch and ward over the operations of the body.

SPIRIT THE GRAND REALITY.

While it is difficult to determine what are *in*voluntary and what are voluntary operations; what are purely intellectual processes and what are sentimental impulses; what are immoral or moral motives, or whether they are simply *un*moral; what we owe to heredity, environment, or education, and what we originate and perform of and from ourselves—while, in fact, it is difficult to determine how far we are creatures of environment and circumstances, and how far we are spirits capable of initiating operations and wielding forces that mould circumstances and determine our status—whether we shall succumb to circumstances or create and control them—we shall find that a great deal will depend upon our attitude, our viewpoint; and here the beauty and utility of the spiritual philosophy is manifest. If we realise that Spirit is the grand reality, that we are permanent amid the changing elements of our bodies and our kaleidoscopic circumstances; that we educate our powers by trusting and employing them; that we are intelligent centres of force, not blind unconscious aggregations of atoms, then we can realise that the purpose of Life here is served by the acquisition of knowledge, the intelligent use of power, the conscious understanding, cultivation, and expression of inherent capabilities and possibilities; or, in other words, that the great business of life is to *live;* to secure all-round development; to mould one's character; to realise ideals; to win the golden mean of use, of rightful observance, exercise, gratification, and enjoyment; to *express* one's self, and live the normal, healthful, happy life naturally—as spontaneously as children; to attain to the thrilling life of self-comprehension and inward realisation of the liberty of the spirit, the joy of being and doing and the glad, conscious exercise of the power of overcoming limita-

tions, of becoming free, wise, and strong in altruistic services to the race. 'M.A. (Oxon)' enforced this view when he said:—'When we learn to cherish Harmony and to love Peace; to aspire to a life of true spiritual vigour and health; to regard the phenomenal evidences of spirit action only as the signs and wonders that testify to the inner working of the inspiring and informing spirit that broods over the waste waters of our earthly life; to avoid the depths where linger the mist and fog of earth, and to rise to the heights where we may breathe the pure and invigorating air that braces the spirit within us; when, in brief, we lift our souls to the noblest ideal that they can grasp, we shall realise, as we cannot now, the spirit and the truth of Spiritualism.' Not only so; we shall realise that the 'Unity of the Spirit' and the 'Brotherhood of Man' are not mere idle phrases, but scientific facts. That we stand related to each other in the Divine order in the closest and most intimate spiritual sympathy—the Law laid upon us, and working through us, requires 'from each, according to his capacity, service to each according to his need'; and Ella Wheeler Wilcox has sweetly emphasised the fact that we are all united by the cord of love on the plane of universal being, in the following beautiful lines:—

'With every impulse, deed or word,
Wherein love blends with duty,
A message speeds along the cord
That gives the earth more beauty.
Your unkind thought, your selfish deed,
Is felt in farthest places;
There are no solitudes where greed
And wrong can hide their faces.
There are no separate lines; the chain,
Too subtle for our seeing,
Unites us all upon the plane
Of universal being.'

CHAPTER II.

MEDIUMSHIP AND PSYCHICAL SUSCEPTIBILITY.

Mediumship, then, is a tutelage that leads you forward from the recognition of the fact that there are possibilities in you that others can utilise, to the understanding of the greater fact that you can utilise those possibilities for yourself. The true cultivation of mediumship is a stepping-stone to the exercise of your own spiritual powers.—J. J. MORSE.

Higher mediumship means higher manhood and womanhood. It means consecration to the weal of all—an every-day consciousness of the invisible yet real substantialities of being. It means a spirit opened to the illapses of life, power and love from the realm of spirit life. In a word, it is becoming aware of the spirituality of our selfhood and our vital relationship to all the spheres of possible spirit life.—PROF. LOVELAND.

IT has become somewhat fashionable of late years to extol the 'higher mediumship'—by which is meant the exercise by the sensitive of his powers of perception on the inner plane as a clairvoyant, psychometrist, or healer. Strictly speaking, however, in so far as these powers are normally employed by their possessor, it is hardly appropriate to apply the term 'mediumship' to them, as that word implies that an outside Intelligence makes use of the medium as his intermediary, for the purpose of communicating with his friends. But, as impressions, suggestions, mental pictures, or symbols may be transferred to, impressed upon, or consciously received by, the seer from operators upon the other side; or he may see and describe spirit persons and convey thoughts from them to those who consult him—although not directly 'controlled' by them—the word mediumship in this extended sense may be permissible.

There is undoubtedly far more communion between the people of the two states of existence than is ordinarily recognised, even by the Spiritualist. Many people act upon spontaneous impulses, and express ideas that they cannot explain to themselves, much less trace to their source. Spirits frequently associate with and serve their friends, although the recipients of their benefactions are unconscious of their dependence upon their unseen inspirers, and would be horrified, in all probability, if they were made aware of the origin of their ideas and impulses.

THE GREAT THOUGHT WORLD.

There is, too, the fact that, as we say, 'ideas are in the air,' and we become related to, and draw upon, the realm of thought forces and principles. Not only can we enter into personal relation with given individuals in the spirit world, but the great thought atmosphere, the plane of universal ideas, is open to those who are attuned to its vibrations, and all progressive spiritual thinkers ultimately arrive at that altitude, no matter what road they travel.* Many mediums have been conscious that they have tapped the thought-tides from the unseen and have been inspired by the combined influences of the thinkers of a certain grade or sphere, and there can be no doubt that there would be more of this kind of inspiration if the aspirational and receptive moods were more intelligently cultivated.

So close and intimate on the plane of spiritual fellowship are the relations between the two worlds that he would be a bold man—or an ignorant one—who would repudiate the probability of his indebtedness to the people of the higher life, individually or collectively. Poets, composers, orators, and writers frequently write and speak 'wiser than they

* It is said that at the time Professor Bell was perfecting his telephone at least three other inventors were developing the same thing. In wireless telegraphy Marconi had three rivals, and who built the first liquid-air apparatus is at present in dispute.

know,' and voice the thoughts which flow into and through them, which were born in that sphere of ideas and powers which we call the great spirit world.*

HOW LUCIDITY CAN BE ATTAINED.

By centreing the thought upon a given object and by purposely abstracting one's self from the external plane of consciousness, it is possible to liberate the latent energies of the psychical body, and by desire, or aspiration, call them into active use, and thus attain a condition of 'lucidity,' or inner perception, in which the mind intuitively apprehends and comprehends states, conditions, qualities or influences to which it is blind, deaf, and unresponsive under ordinary circumstances. This is the condition that is induced in the subject by the mesmerist when he is aroused from the coma into which he at first lapses. It is the 'superior condition,' or the 'ecstasy,' experienced by such men as A. J. Davis, Swedenborg, and by mystics generally. It can be attained by mental abstraction, meditation, and desire, or by concentration, contemplation, and self-suggestion, and in course of time may be induced at will. Thus, by 'retiring into the silence' (or, entering into the holy of holies of one's inner self), and by calling upon the 'Christ within,' illumination will eventually be experienced which will constitute a veritable revelation, and prove to be a source of unexpected strength.

THE ATTITUDE TO BE OBSERVED.

The attitude of mind to be adopted by the student who wishes to normally cultivate his sensitiveness and direct his

* 'Men err in attributing to spirit influence that only which is objective. The truer inspirations flow into the soul when it is least conscious of objective matters. The voice of the higher spirits communing with the soul is silent, noiseless, and frequently unobserved, felt only in its results, but unknown in its processes. For all inspiration flows direct from Him whom you call God; that is to say, from the Great All-pervading Spirit who is in, and through, and amongst all. You live indeed, as we live, in a vast ocean of spirit, from which all knowledge and wisdom flows into the soul of man.—'IMPERATOR' to 'M.A. (Oxon)'.

soul forces for definite purposes, differs in some respects from that in which the seeker for mediumship approaches the subject. He must concentrate his attention upon his own sensations, and cultivate the introspective powers of mind. Instead of being acted upon by a 'controlling spirit' he must become his own control. He cannot 'leave it all to the spirits'; he is to become the seer, the knower; ready to receive, interpret, and respond to the thrills and impulses that touch his psychical sphere. He must learn to estimate their significance; grow conscious of their quality; realise their value and be able to *live* the inner life—to feel, see, hear, and cognise with the soul's perceptions. He has to govern himself; to discipline his emotions; to subordinate his own likes and dislikes that he may deepen, intensify, focalise, and realise his consciousness upon the inner plane, so that the faintest vibrations of the subtile personal aura of others, and their delicate moral and spiritual aromas may be 'sensed' and gauged as clearly as those which are more violent, coarse, and gross. He needs to be sufficiently self-cultured and self-centred to register and interpret these 'influences' and then throw them off, so that he will not be affected permanently or injuriously. He will require to know how and when to be 'open' and responsive, and to cultivate sufficient will-power to positively close up all avenues of psychical susceptibility whenever and wherever he feels it necessary. His desire should be to become consciously able to receive, and be 'inspired' by, the thoughts and emotions which move the hearts of others, and yet maintain his balance and preserve a calm, discriminating attitude.

SPIRIT INSPIRERS WELCOME.

The intimate blending of his mental states with the 'impressions' or thought-transferences which he receives from the people both on this side and 'over there,' often perplexes the conscientious sensitive who neither wishes to

deceive others nor be deceived, and he requires considerable patience as well as discernment to learn to differentiate the ideas and impulses that reach him from an outside source, from those which result from the activity of his own spirit—and, indeed, it is often hard to tell whether the activity of his own spirit is not due to some stimulus that reaches him from a spirit friend.

Many persons are natural healers, intuitive character readers and normal seers from childhood; hence it is often hard for them to determine whether they are indebted to spirits or do their work unaided. It is a matter of evidence. If they receive proofs of the presence and action of an intelligent operator 'on the other side,' well and good; but if they do not, and yet see, 'sense,' and heal, they are doing good work, and at least demonstrate the fact that we are spirits here and now, and possess these spiritual gifts or psychical faculties by virtue of our spirit origin and nature. That is a great point gained as against materialism. The fact is, mediumship and psychical susceptibility can and should be cultivated side by side. If sensitives were to devote two evenings each week, one to the development of mediumship and the other to the culture of psychical susceptibility and the exercise of those powers, progress could be made along both lines with interacting beneficial results.

. It would be the height of unwisdom for one who essays to become as a spirit among spirits and enter the inner realm of spiritual life, to scornfully reject the sympathy and guidance of such spirits as would willingly aid him without infringing his psychical liberties or rights. The more fully he realises this fact and the more willing he is to receive, and be grateful for, the protection, assistance, and inspiring thoughts of the illuminated and loving people of the after-death world, the more he will be assisted by those who are fitted to co-operate with him in his laudable endeavours to cultivate his sensitiveness and attain higher spirituality, that he may be the more helpful to suffering humanity.

HAPHAZARD DEVELOPMENT DEPRECATED.

The cultivation of psychical susceptibility has hitherto been left too much to chance. Many persons have been conscious that they possessed powers of perception and intuitive cognition beyond the ordinary range, but they did not understand themselves, nor were they understood by those around them.

'Sensitives' frequently suffer extremely because of the indifference and callousness of others. They themselves are apt to imagine that they are in danger of insanity; their friends and acquaintances regard them as being 'peculiar,' 'eccentric,' or 'not quite right'; and, as a natural consequence, they shrink into themselves and endeavour to repress all spontaneous exercise of their gifts; and what *should* be regarded as a priceless boon, and an agency for good, comes to be considered as an infliction and a cause of suffering and misery. Those who are moderately sensitive might, by attention to the necessary conditions, by study of their own peculiar sensations, and by experiments to develop their powers, speedily become conscious of the fact that they are affected by, and reflect, the psychical and mental conditions of others.

What are called psychometry, clairvoyance, and clairaudience may be classed together as one faculty, and it is more than probable that the phenomena of thought-transference are but modes of the same sensitiveness, or the power of reception and perception of vibrations on the psychical or so-called 'astral' plane.

REALISATION.

The consciousness of the psychical realm is a state of realisation which differs from that of the outer physical and memory consciousness. In many instances the ordinary consciousness is suspended and the psychic is in a state resembling trance; yet there are conditions of illumination, or occasional experiences, in which the percipient is fully aware of all that transpires, and the psychical is added to the physical consciousness, not substituted for it. Accidental experiences

have aroused curiosity and inquiry up to a certain point, or the haphazard groping in the dark of the ordinary 'developing circle,' where the sitters, Micawber-like, have 'waited for whatever might turn up,' has led to the discovery of a number of individuals who, with the aid of excarnate operators, have become successful psychometrists and clairvoyants, and some of these (when they have been studious and progressive) have at length attained the stage of self-unfoldment and self-comprehension, and have become *normal* psychometrists and clairvoyants by learning how to place themselves in the receptive attitude; but surely the time has arrived for the adoption of more intelligent and rational methods of development.

While it is undoubtedly true that psychics, like poets, 'must be born, not made,' because 'sensitiveness' is a natural condition depending upon a physiological state, or an organic and constitutional aptitude, there are doubtless many persons who, while possessing these qualifications, are ignorant of their value when cultivated and intelligently employed. Most sensitives of note can relate strange incidents in their childhood which revealed their psychical openness, but such experiences are in reality pointers to the fact that there are in all of us inherent dormant capabilities which we may call forth and unfold—if we will.

STUDY AND SYSTEMATIC CULTIVATION NEEDED.

A School of the Prophets might be founded, and classes instituted for instruction in the methods of psychical expression, but no amount of *in*-struction will suffice. It is only what the pupil appropriates and utilises for the *edu*cation of his own powers that benefits him. Evolution is from within outwards, and the unfolding and expression of the interior powers of the spirit self is a work which must be performed by each one for himself. Pupils daily devote hours to practice upon the piano that they may master the difficulties of the right use of their fingers. The initial experiences are trying and monotonous, but the reward is sure in the ability and

power which come at last to the lover of music. Why should not the psychical student devote his time and thought, with equal persistence and patience, to the cultivation of his powers and the development of his responsiveness to those tones, chords, notes, voices, thrills, and harmonies which charm the inner ear and ravish the soul? It is only by repetition, by continuous application and endeavour that men become expert and successful. The difficulty which at first seems insurmountable disappears when resolutely attacked.

NO TWO PSYCHICS ARE EXACTLY ALIKE.

Sensitives who consciously exercise their soul-powers of perception vary considerably, and the personal equation has to be reckoned with in all cases. Some psychics can succeed under conditions which present insuperable barriers to others; and while we may give the general outlines of methods to be pursued for the cultivation of psychical faculties, it will be necessary for the observant and intelligent student to make experiments and discover the specific conditions favourable for their exercise.

There are different planes of psychical unfoldment, of clairvoyant and psychometric perception; different degrees of lucidity and of response to influences and impressions; and the abilities of psychics differ. Some are quick, intuitive, affectionate, and poetic. Many readily respond to thought-pictures and impulses, but seldom reach the inner plane of clear spirit sight. Many perceive symbolical representations rather than the things themselves, and the value of their experiences will depend upon their ability to interpret the symbols accurately. Some seers are mystical, others practical and matter-of-fact, and other differences will soon become apparent to the student. The nature of one's psychical experiences will vary from time to time. On one occasion a seer may reach a high level, breathe a clear air, become conscious of his spiritual surroundings, and possibly see into the spirit-world, whereas at other times he may feel himself

hemmed in and hampered in an incomprehensible fashion. To-day he may be on the mountain-tops of exaltation, and revel in the delightful liberty and power which he realises; to-morrow he may be befogged and enveloped in the mists of the sense world. He may try to cultivate his interior nature, and may observe all the instructions he can obtain, and yet have no outward and visible sign of any inward change or progress towards his goal. He may 'retire into the silence,' and by meditation and supplication seek to harmonise his nature to the right rhythm for receptive response to the vibrations of the psychical atmosphere; or he may concentrate his attention and make his demand, may focalise his will-power and seek to visualise; but all to no purpose—the heavens are as brass, and his darkness is unrelieved. Then he may relax his strained endeavours and simply wait—neither anxious nor demanding, neither expectant nor imperious; content to wait; hopeful, but not impatient; and then the light may come and the inner self may enter into the conscious realisation of its relationship to the realities of the unseen, and the outer consciousness may understandingly enjoy the inspirations of that higher and inward light. In one way or another, sooner or later, the opening up of the soul's senses will be achieved if patience has her perfect work. But a serene and peaceable mind, a waiting and attentive attitude, a harmonious and altruistic spirit will prove to be the best passport into the inner life and the attainment of the superior condition.

CHAPTER III.

MYSTICAL, OCCULT, AND MAGICAL POWERS.

There is one science and philosophy of life here and hereafter, that comes free to all as the sunlight, and scorns the limitations of creed, set forms of belief, and the organic efforts of self-constituted leaders. It founds no lodge, and its believers are not identified by grip or sign. Its holy temple is the wide world, its brothers are mankind, its effort is to escape from the mysteries of ignorance to the light of truth, its leaders are the independent workers innumerable, who labour in diverse ways, and the angel host.—HUDSON TUTTLE.

Psychology, or strong will, is perhaps a more potent factor in the world's economy than the world's rank and file know or dream of; and when psychological power is projected in any direction from a strongly magnetic person, it touches the object or person aimed at for good or evil, and according to the intent for good or evil of the psychologist has it been named 'white or black magic.' As to spells, charms, incantations, &c., these were only used as means of concentrating will-power, the real power being in the WILL, especially as above stated, when that will is projected upon its object by powerful magnetism.—EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN.

As regards the so-called astral, magical, or occult powers of man, *self*-culture may be regarded by some people as chimerical. To them these alleged 'occult' forces are mysterious, and they believe that those who would learn to employ them require the aid of adepts, brotherhoods, secret rites, incantations, extraordinary discipline, symbols, spells, and we know not what. Mystery and fear, ignorance and superstition go hand in hand, and the realm of the unknown was ever the happy hunting-ground of the charlatan, who, with his bombastic pretences, fattened upon the credulity and folly of his fellows.

Every one of us is a centre-stance as well as a circumstance. We exert our influence by our example, and, too, by our auric emanations. We radiate health, hope, helpfulness,

and good; or send out influences which deplete and injure those who come into our sphere. If we are ignorant, but sensitive and psychically 'open,' we may be torn by conflicting emotions and distracted by cross magnetisms, or fall victims to the positive psychical currents that are projected upon us by the crafty, designing, selfish, opinionated people whose fair pretences and smooth words but cloak their ulterior sensual, mercenary, or malicious designs.

UNCONSCIOUS HYPNOTIC INFLUENCE.

Two persons may be naturally *en rapport* without any knowledge of the fact that they are psychical beings or that there is any such subtile relationship. This explains why some people exercise a fascination over their fellows, influencing their minds, sometimes even to the extent of making them tools and catspaws to do their will for good or evil. These are matters of daily experience; but the great trouble is that there is such profound ignorance with regard to them, and it is in ignorance that the danger lies, not in knowledge. One great fact in this connection which everybody should know is that all human beings can protect themselves against adverse or injurious psychical suggestions. When they are conscious of their power they can concentrate their will, shut the doors and windows of their personality, and refuse to be impinged upon or affected by influences other than those morally helpful and sustaining. Is it not the fact that the successful business man is often one who, whether he understands the science or not, has the power of bringing his will force to bear upon the unsuspecting persons with whom he wishes to do business until they comply with his desires? On the Stock Exchange, in the mart, the factory, and the shop, aye, in almost all the relations of life, men are constantly directing their psychical powers upon one another in this way. The successful salesman sells you something you do not want, but it is not until you have quitted his store and are free of the 'psychological envelope' in which

he enmeshed you, that you awake to a realisation of the fact. The successful orator, preacher, reformer, revivalist, is generally one whose personal magnetism enables him to dominate his hearers and relate himself to them on the psychical plane, so that, although he may be unaware of the fact, his utterances become to them hypnotic suggestions.

THE WONDERS OF EASTERN MAGIC EXAGGERATED.

Those who talk of the wisdom of the ancients should remember that *we* are the ancients of the race. The further we probe into the records of the mystical East, the nearer we get to the childhood of the race, not to its maturity. If evolution—physical, mental, and spiritual—has been transpiring throughout the ages, and the race progressing towards that 'one far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves,' the world must possess in the spirit that moves this age the culmination and outcome of the thoughts and spiritual illuminations of the learned, wise, inspired, and great thinkers and teachers, poets and seers of all times; knowledge and enlightenment are more widespread, and the people of to-day know more of truth, and there is more intelligent goodness and love actively expressed and more generally manifested, than in any bygone period. 'Tien Sien Tie,' speaking through Mr. J. J. Morse,* after mentioning the fact that his experience had been widespread and his observations extended, for he had enjoyed the opportunity of investigating the so-called magic of the Orientals, went on to 'unhesitatingly affirm' that when magic is divested of all its superfluous elements and brought down to its basic facts and laws, the enlarged statements as to the alleged wonders performed by ancient magicians were 'either thoughtless or wilful exaggerations,' and that if their claims are closely investigated the alleged performers of occult things avoid giving any public statement, and shelter behind vows of secrecy, and refer to the

* 'Practical Occultism.'

claimed results of the powers they say they possess. If this fact is borne in mind, 'half the glory and three-fourths of the mystery associated with magic in the past will flee away for ever. The Magi of the past,' he contended, 'when not teachers pure and simple, had been trained in a certain course of practical philosophy in regard to man's mental, psychological and spiritual powers, expressed in symbols and veiled in allegories, which, when penetrated and interpreted, yielded only the same kind of knowledge familiar to Modern Spiritualists. There is in man a power which enables him to use all beneath him or upon a level with him, to the extent of his ability—but his ability is the governing factor, he cannot go beyond that. The power of the will, governed by the enlightened soul and intelligence, enables him to accomplish many things that seem most remarkable to the untrained.'

MAGIC, WHITE AND BLACK.

Dr. Franz Hartmann says in his work on 'Magic, White and Black': 'Magic is that knowledge of the spiritual powers hidden within the constitution of man, which enables him to employ them consciously and intelligently. If he employs them for the purpose of attaining perfection through the realisation within himself of the highest ideal, common to all mankind, it is called "white magic"; and he may use these powers for beneficent purposes and in harmony with the universal law of love and justice; if he employs them for low or selfish purposes, or in opposition to divine law, he makes the high subservient to the low, he degrades the spirit, and with it himself. This misuse of divine powers is called "black magic," and it is not my object to teach this art, but to warn the readers against it.' It will be seen that black magic differs from white in the character of the motives and methods of the one who practises it. The white magician exerts his influence over others for their good. His motives are true and kindly; he uses his will, magnetism, suggestion, and vital force to strengthen and stimulate those with whom

he deals to virtuous courses. He heals the sick, comforts the sad, encourages the weary, and helps the weak to become firm and brave. He does not seek to dominate others that he may *use* and bend them to his own purposes, but he strives to awaken in them the power of self-control and to assist them to gain the higher level of spiritual consciousness, that they may be intromitted to the world of souls and interiorly grasp spiritual truth.

The black magician, on the other hand, endeavours to exert his psychological powers to fascinate others and render them subservient to his will, so that they shall become his tools to do his behests and further his schemes; gratify his love of power, his vanity, passion, or avarice; yield obedience to his whim, or execute his malicious designs to injure others. Those who thus seek to employ the force of will to dominate others, and exercise psychical control over them to gratify their own private and personal ends, are unworthy custodians of the power, and while they may succeed temporarily, they will themselves most assuredly suffer in the long run, and eventually, to use a Scotch proverb, 'sup sorrow with a big spoon.'

HYPNOTISM: ITS DANGERS.

There is, we fear, too much ground for the statement that we read recently that the study of magic is pursued in many cases for the sake of the power it is supposed to give to the student to cause others to do according to his will, and that he may be able to make the forces of Nature serve him in the prosecution of his selfish designs. There are a number of advertisers who, according to their own assertions, are prepared to teach others how to hypnotise so that they can 'compel success,' even to the extent of making unwilling people sign documents in their favour.* The power of

* Here is an extract from a circular by one of these advertisers: 'We show you how people are made to execute wills in favour of certain persons. Hundreds of wills have been made contrary to the real wishes of the maker. *The subtle power of hypnotism having secretly played its wonderful part.* A lady in Kansas City took our course, hypnotised her husband, and by

hypnotism in the hands of unscrupulous people, when employed against ignorant, unsuspicious, or credulous persons who can be terrorised, is a most dangerous one, and no one who respects himself will submit to the experiments of a would-be operator whom he does not know and cannot trust; because the subject is put into a peculiar state of semi-trance or sleep, and the operator dictates what he shall see, feel, think, and remember; thus the senses are subjugated, the memory is interfered with, and the subject is subservient to the will, or thought, or suggestion, or mental direction of the operator; and wherever the personal influence of the operator is the dominant factor in the situation and one person leans upon another for strength and guidance, there is likelihood of trouble. There is no danger in the *use* of hypnotic influence and suggestion, but there is great risk that the power may be abused.

Mr. James Coates, in his work on Human Magnetism, says: 'Suggestion in hypnosis is an impression made upon the psychical man,' . . and he declares that 'no subject, however intellectual, level-headed, and balanced, can resist a suggestion given *in a proper manner*, while the subject is in a proper state of conscious, semi-conscious, or non-conscious hypnosis.' *

means of post-hypnotic suggestion induced him to deed his entire property to her, after which she refused to live with him.' This circular also states 'that many of the most complimentary letters we have received are from people who are employing the unconscious use of hypnotism, or personal magnetism only, and they feel that the publication of their names might make those whom they wish to influence afraid of them.'

* The editor of 'Suggestive Therapeutics' says: 'The exercise of hypnotic power requires a dual action to be effective. The power is not in the operator alone; nor in the subject alone. There is the positive or projecting power of the first and the negative or receptive power of the other. There must be a responsive enthusiasm, energy, vibration or magnetism on the part of the subject to meet halfway the positive energy of the operator before hypnotic suggestion can do its work. Hence, if the operator be a man and the subject a woman, there are opportunities for the abuse of this power which will ever be in evidence as long as one governs and another obeys. It is not the less true, though we have here spoken of man as the operator and woman as the subject, that when these places are reversed precisely the same conditions exist, rendering an abuse of this acquired authority possible.'

THE USE AND ABUSE OF HYPNOTISM.

Great stress is laid by some writers upon the non-injurious character of hypnotism in the hands of a 'proper,' 'qualified,' 'reputable' practitioner—but the point is:—what of the power of the *dis*reputable and designing?

It is said that no one can be hypnotised against his will, or made to do anything contrary to his own wishes or without his consent; this, however, is disputed by others who claim to speak with the authority of knowledge.

But what of those who are approached by slow and stealthy stages and psychologised before they are aroused to use their will?

Pleasant, tactful, suave, and pushing, the skilful operator exerts his insidious influence, insinuates his poisonous suggestions, and directs the attention of his subject away from his point—or overshadows him and seems to paralyse his powers of thought—and sweeps him along until he *makes* him think and act as he wishes, and the subject does not wake up to realise how he has been manipulated until it is too late or he has been made to suffer. The danger is in the fact that sensitive people are often ignorant, afraid, and weak of will; or they are confiding, off guard, and their sympathies are played upon until they are subjected and captivated; in fact, many people (sometimes even those who know something of the facts) unconsciously comply with the conditions and give themselves away to crafty and unprincipled operators, who rely upon the fact that many people are naturally sensitive, trusting, and easily affected.

Of the beneficial effects of magnetic treatment by kindly, sympathetic, and competent healers there can be no doubt, and when we deal more fully with magnetic or psychopathic healing we shall enlarge upon that aspect of the subject, but while the psychological influence of good and high-principled people is too seldom used with intention and forethought, the 'confidence trick' people have discovered their power and

use it with evil or selfish intent; and one of the greatest of the pressing needs of the hour is the promulgation of the knowledge of the danger, into which the ignorant and unthinking run, of being overpowered by the positive 'suggestions' and thought-projections of cunning and self-seeking people who knowingly employ their will-power for their own ends. Since, however, there must be harmony of psychical states for the responsive vibrations to be elicited, the well-poised, self-centred, virtuous soul runs but little risk of contamination.*

SELF-PROTECTION BY WILL POWER.

The 'confidence trick' is played in a variety of ways, and the student in this realm will need to cultivate the ability to 'discern' the spirit or intention, motive or disposition, of those with whom he comes into contact. He should develop his will-power by concentration, so that it may be employed to close up the psychic self against the intrusion of harmful influences. It is said that this result can be achieved by holding in mind the thought of self-possession; by joining the hands, finger-tips to finger-tips, or clasping them together, and crossing the legs, and resolutely turning the thought and conversation into ordinary social channels. It is, therefore, evident that *will* culture is as requisite as is the attainment of the receptive and responsive psychical state.

The 'will' is not an independent attribute or a separate function. It is simply the soul's force concentrated and intelligently employed. The secret of its use is to be found in the three words 'rely on yourself.' It is developed by exercise.

* A writer affirms 'that no one can be psychologised unless he surrenders his will to another. Therefore the essential thing on the part of the individual is to strengthen the will power, to cultivate self-confidence and self-reliance, and parents should teach this to their children. No magic-working suggester can injure another who realises the fact that no power can touch him, and simply ignores the suggestions; for magic power can have no effect, if it be simply ignored. On the other hand, if the person keeps thinking about it and believes the magic workers can control him and accomplish their designs, he will bring about the evil results by his own volition and thought.'

Each effort increases the power which can be employed for the next. The cultivation of will-power is a process, and strength of will can be developed by trusting it, by using it with single-heartedness and pure purpose, and by its exercise strength of character can be achieved and psychical self-possession realised. We now know that psychical or occult powers are perfectly natural, and that they can be trained and trusted just the same as other mental faculties. There is nothing super-natural or magical about them. The same methods of observation, application, concentration, and determination which make the successful business man or scientist, will make one master of the forces of his soul-self. The phenomena of mesmerism, hypnotism, suggestion, and telepathy enable us to understand so-called magic, to guard against which the development and employment of the *will* are indispensable; as, for the matter of that, they are in all realms of attainment of knowledge and the use of power.

NO NEED TO BECOME A HERMIT.

It is not necessary to retire from the world and become a hermit or recluse in order to become a mystic or unfold interior powers. People who make vows, live in solitude, and fast for prolonged periods illustrate the power of will and afford us examples of perseverance and devotion, but they do not necessarily attain a high altitude of spiritual illumination by their self-imposed ordeals and by mortifying the flesh. The probability is that their attention is too strongly concentrated upon their voluntary seclusion and self-inflicted suffering to permit them to gain that calm and receptive serenity of spirit so necessary for interior evolution. To the same extent that the body suffers the mind is likely to become distracted, and its absorption in the process of maintaining the artificial conditions thus induced will prevent the attainment of that healthy poise and harmony of body and mind which are indispensable for true spiritual growth.

Habits may be unconsciously formed (because we are not self-observant) that, when we realise how they have captured and enslaved us, we shall find terribly hard to break. This applies to modes of thought and feeling quite as much as it does to daily practices; hence the habit of level-headed self-scrutiny—of making one's self 'toe the mark'—is a wise and helpful one, provided we are not morbidly self-critical and condemnatory.

THE VALUE OF GOOD HABITS.

Habits can be consciously formed as the result of thought and exercise. First, we voluntarily pursue certain lines of thought, modes of expression or of action. After a time we cease to think much about them. We have formed the custom and involuntarily continue the same course of conduct; thus habit becomes second nature. It lies outside the boundary or below the threshold of our so-called 'objective' or active consciousness, and our 'sub,' 'subjective' or involuntary self takes it up and continues it, irrespective of whether it is good or bad, helpful or injurious. Habits, therefore, need watching and occasionally over-hauling. We should take ourselves in hand and go into 'dry-dock,' so to speak, for a close examination and to clean off the barnacles that impede our progress.

It is equally possible to lower the tone of the mind, to give way to moods, to become self-conscious and distrustful, to be passive, receptive, weak of will, and infirm of purpose. The great remedy for this state of things is substitution and occupation. Self-pity is dangerous, self-surrender to mistrustful and self-depreciatory moods is worse than dangerous—it is demoralising; it is destructive of character and paves the way for failure, misery, insanity and degradation. Self-examination in the strenuous, hopeful, and affirmative mood will be inspiring and increase strength and purpose, but morbid introspection leads to worry, fear, irritability, and loss of self-respect.

Good habits of thought, feeling, desire, and living should

be formed, and substituted for those which are less spiritually satisfactory. Thus deep breathing, concentration, optimistic thinking, cheery kindliness, self-reliance, positive self-centred psychical self-control, so as to be able to open or shut the windows of the soul at will, can all be cultivated until they become habitual and cease to be exceptional experiences that demand watchfulness and close application to maintain them. When they become the ordinary normal practices of daily life the mind and will are left free to be exercised consciously in other and more extended realms of use and discovery, and for the acquisition of lucidity in the 'superior condition.'

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY.

The value of knowledge consists in the *use* one makes of it—in its application in daily life not only for personal development but for the good of others. The responsibility for right motives and right exercise rests with each individual. Psychical self-culture is not necessarily selfish or dangerous, not more so, if the motive is right, than musical or scientific self-culture. One must first learn and know before he can understand, use, or teach. Personal influence by example is the best form of teaching, so that *self*-culture is a duty—as much for the good of others as for one's own benefit. The *motive* for the acquisition of knowledge determines the morality or virtue of the act. If merely personal ends are served, if power is sought to gratify ambition, pride, self-seeking, vengeful or mercenary ends, then the pursuit of knowledge is tainted and the seeker can never attain *true* self-unfoldment or spiritual self-realisation—his motives inevitably close the door against him. Only the pure in heart can see the Kingdom of Heaven; only by the love of truth and goodness for their own sake, without hope of reward or desire for gain; only by loving service to others and co-operation in the great cause of human emancipation and progress, can the key be found to the spiritual realm. Spirit 'gifts' are not of necessity spiritual *graces*. A man may be an intellectual giant but a spiritual

dwarf; he may be psychically sensitive and able to read the signs of the times on the outer plane with much success, but he cannot penetrate to the realm of spiritual causes or comprehend spiritual values until his own motives are attuned to love. The difficulty hitherto has been to ascertain the actual meaning of the practices and the doctrines of ancient mystics, as there was an outer and an inner significance to their utterances. The claimed 'mystic knowledge' was not written but it was transferred 'from mouth to ear' and was frequently hidden from the uninitiated by figurative allegories and symbols. It was said of Jesus that he spoke in parables so that the populace might not understand. The consequence is that we have been left in doubt as to what the Gnostics or Mystics, who claimed to 'know,' really meant, and we can only conjecture regarding the actual purport of the parables, symbols, metaphors and other methods that were employed for concealing rather than revealing ideas.

We may at least suppose that the object sought to be attained by occultists and mystics was really the harmonisation of the individual, by subordinating the animal propensities and selfish desires to the control of the moral mind, and by the cultivation, or the surrender, of the will, to attain psychical liberty and lucidity. The irrepressible conflict between the inclinations of the outer, sensuous nature, and the ideals and intuitions of the inner, spiritual man, has to be faced and settled by each one for himself. The question is whether the passions shall be gratified, and the bodily appetites shall rule —and ruin; or whether they shall be sternly repressed, denied, and as far as possible crushed (with ceaseless and painful striving and bitter self-condemnation for failures to maintain the austere self-command necessary for the continual denial); or whether the Law of Right, of Use (of temperate and virtuous exercise and pleasure in such employment), shall be loyally observed. The question is one which, though old, is ever new, and demands solution from each individual sooner or later—and 'blessed is he that overcometh' and brings the

outer nature to respond to the control and direction of the inner self, and avoids the extremes of perversion and abuse on the one hand and of unnatural suppression, solitude and denial on the other; and while *in* the world is not *of* it, but is able to live the wise, healthy, and righteous life of temperance in all things. It is not necessary to live in forests or caves, or to fast and make vows, or join occultic brotherhoods, secret societies, or communities, to secure these results. But it *is* necessary to be natural, strong, sympathetic, helpful, and loving. Ella Wheeler Wilcox puts the matter as forcibly as beautifully in the following lines:—

'Here in the heart of the world,
Here in the noise and the din,
Here where our spirits are hurled
To battle with sorrow and sin;
This is the place and the spot
For knowledge of infinite things;
This is the kingdom where thought
Can conquer the prowess of kings.

'Here in the tumult and roar,
Show what it is to be calm;
Show how the spirit can soar
And bring back its healing and balm.

'Stand not aloof nor apart:
Plunge in the thick of the fight.
There in the street and the mart,
That is the place to do right;
Not in some cloister or cave,
Not in some kingdom above;
Here on this side of the grave,
Here we should labour and love.'

CHAPTER IV.

PHYSICAL AND MENTAL CULTURE.

The importance of good health can hardly be exaggerated; upon its preservation our general well-being mainly depends; for its loss there can be no adequate recompense.—'LIGHT.'

Man faces two worlds, and is amenable to the laws of both. He must understand that obedience to the laws of physical health is as obligatory and as much a part of religion as obedience to moral laws. Perfect health is a primary element of moral excellence.—HUDSON TUTTLE.

THE fullest expression of the powers of man—the manifestation of his highest and best capabilities—can alone be secured when healthy conditions are afforded for their exercise. Perfect health is Nature's ideal, and health and sanity go together; or should we not say that they mean the same thing although employed in reference to body and mind. The possession of a robust, vigorous, well-balanced physical body—the 'Temple of the Holy Ghost'—is a priceless treasure which makes optimism possible. A sound body will afford to its possessor possibilities of psychical experiences, of pleasurable emotions, and of genuine all-round happiness which the sick and suffering may envy but cannot share. To be spiritually sane and clear, strong and serene, there must be harmony and equipoise between the forces of soul and body, that they may act and react upon the consciousness with refreshing and stimulating power. No wonder, then, that increasing attention is being directed to the processes of living; not only to the influence of the body upon the mind, but of diet upon both body and mind; of the power of mind to affect the body; and the importance of right habits in

regard to diet and drink in order to secure health, buoyancy, and well-being.

DO 'CURES' CURE?

If a man from Mars were to suddenly drop down in London and read the newspaper advertisements of the alleged wonderful specifics for suffering humanity, he would probably begin to speculate as to whether any of the people of the earth were ever well! What with liver pills, kidney cures, stomach bitters, lung tinctures, head powders, brain invigorators, heart tonics, blood purifiers, skin ointments, nerve stimulants, and indigestion and dyspepsia tablets; drinks, powders, salts, &c., he would naturally suspect that there must be something radically—or racially—wrong with the people, either in body or mind, or *both*. If these 'cures' cure, how is it that the sales increase and doctors multiply? Do the people continue the mode of living which brought them down and induced disease, and so repeat their folly? or is it that they are psychologised — suggestionised — into believing themselves ailing? Does the drug-taking habit become a form of intemperance like dram-drinking? Are we a race of despondent, dyspeptic decadents, or is it only our 'little way'?

DISEASE: ITS CAUSE AND CURE.

It is contended by some writers that there is in reality but *one* disease, namely, impure blood, caused by poison or foreign substance in the blood, due to imperfect digestion and non-assimilation of food and the consequent mal-nutrition of the body, which may result from *over* feeding or improper food, impure air, over-strain, carelessness or non-observance of natural laws, chill, excess or perversion; or it may follow mental causes such as shock, fear, worry, anger, grief, or prolonged excitement, and too intense concentration.

If, as is affirmed by Dr. Dewey, the brain is a self-feeding organ—the power house of the body—a self-charging dynamo, regaining its exhausted energies through rest and sleep; and

our need for food is limited to the necessity to supply the nourishment required to make up the wastage which has been going on in the body, then it seems certain that the brain cannot get rest and opportunity to store up energy so long as it is taxed to digest, or get rid of, the food-masses that accumulate in the stomach, with more of decomposition than digestion, and consequent flatulency and dyspepsia. If it is true that from early morning until late at night there is a gradual expenditure of energy and decline of strength, no matter how much or how little food may be taken, or how thoroughly it may be digested, and there comes a time when even the strongest becomes weary and must go to bed—not to the dining-room—to regain strength, then it is manifest that rest is our only means of recovery from exhaustion, and we may well exclaim, 'Nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep.' It has been said that during slumber there is a change in the magnetic conditions of the body and of the relations it holds to the psychical realm; that the spiritual or inner consciousness becomes active, and we breathe the life-giving currents of the psychical atmosphere and come into closer relation with, and are quickened by, the powers of the Spirit Divine. Pure air, pure water (for use inwardly and externally), sunshine, and an active, cheerful mind, are essential to health and happiness. Next to these comes the observance of Nature's requirements in respect to hunger, thirst, and sleep.

TREATMENT OF THE SICK.

It is commonly believed that if the healthy need food the sick will need it even more; but it would appear that those who are ill recover more quickly if they are not dosed with food or drugs, because the process of digesting even small quantities of food is a tax upon the strength of the patient and diverts it from the work of restoration; and also because the renovating power exists in the brain, not in either food or drugs, and the patient will recuperate most thoroughly if Nature is given a free course in her reparative work. When

that has been accomplished the sufferer will be free from disease, the desire for food will return, and hunger will be experienced. It should, it is claimed, be the practice in the sick room to withhold food until there is a natural desire for it; the sufferer should not be tempted, worried, badgered, or coaxed to 'take something,' and there is no fear that he will starve to death if he does not take nourishment for a few days, or even weeks.

The old saying, in its popular but inaccurate form, 'Feed a cold and starve a fever,' has been responsible for much mischief, for it is an erroneous rendering of the fact that '*if* you feed a cold you *will have* to starve a fever,' so that it actually advises the very course of procedure which must be avoided. The local congestion which causes the painful symptoms that we denominate 'cold' can be relieved more expeditiously if food is withheld and cold water is given and freely imbibed, and local fomentations, hot packs, or vapour baths are used to open the pores of the skin. The desire for food will assert itself just as soon as normal healthy action is restored.

When a bone is broken the surgeon can only set it—Nature repairs the injury. Doctors are rapidly coming round to recognise that the involuntary powers of the self—sometimes called the sub-conscious self—that operate below the threshold of the every-day consciousness instinctively, will, if given free play, restore the patient to perfect health whenever that is possible; and those who are sick, sad, and suffering can, by preserving a cheerful, buoyant frame of mind, consciously assist Nature to a very large extent to build up new cells and healthy tissues until their deranged organs are practically renewed; for, as Andrew Jackson Davis said in the 'Spiritual Telegraph,' as long ago as the year 1854: 'The mind can, by its own action, both cause and cure disease. Even as prominent an organism as a cancer can be psychologised into being, and cured by the action of the same law. It is very necessary that modern Spiritualists understand the whole force of this principle.'

DIET: DIFFERENT DOCTRINES.

On the question of diet much has been said and written, and contradictory theories are continually being advanced. One writer advises his readers never to go out into the open air until the system is fortified by a good breakfast, yet many people have been wonderfully improved in health by abandoning the early morning meal, because, says Dr. Dewey, during sleep the body is without exercise, and there is the minimum of waste, and little, if any, to repair on awakening, and consequently there is no immediate necessity for food.

A newspaper recently stated that 'fruits in general are ill adapted to sustain human life for any length of time because they contain remarkably little matter that is convertible, when eaten, into muscle and blood. Bananas and grapes have two per cent., while apples, cherries, strawberries, blackberries, cranberries, lemons, and oranges are able to lay claim to only one per cent. —this, too, when skins and seeds are put aside.'

But a teacher of 'Zoism' states that the 'Zoist avoids, as far as possible, all cooked foods: even cooked vegetables and grains. He eats raw meal, raw fruit, raw nuts. The raw apple contains more zone than a whole plateful of cooked food'!

Another 'new school' medical man says: 'There is this to be said about fruits, that all those containing acids decompose the gastric juice, as they all contain potash salts in union with free acids. As soon as they reach the stomach the free hydrochloric acid of the gastric juice unites with the potash, setting the fruit acid free to irritate the stomach. There is never any desire for acid fruits through real hunger, especially those of the hyperacid kinds; they are simply taken to gratify that lower sense—relish. . . Because of the general impression that they are healthful, and no tax, human stomachs are converted into cider mills at will, regardless of between-meal times. By their ravishing flavour and apparent ease of digestion, apples still play an important part in the "fall of man" from that higher estate, the Eden without its

dyspepsia. . . Tropical fruits are without acids, and are therefore well adapted to a class of people who have only the least use for muscle and brains. Acid fruits can only be taken with apparent impunity by the young and old who can generate gastric juice copiously.'

EVERY ONE MUST JUDGE FOR HIMSELF.

'The working energy of a pound of pulse (beans, peas, lentils),' says a 'Zoist,' 'is three times as great as the working energy contained in one pound of beefsteak'; and, according to this same authority, 'raw oatmeal is the ideal food'; and, further, he asserts that 'vegetarianism is the rock upon which health is built.'

Professor Huxley, however, pointed out that 'mere chemical analysis is, by itself, a very insufficient guide as to the usefulness and nutritive value of an article of food. A substance to be nutritious must not only contain some or other of the food-stuffs, but contain them in an available—that is, digestible form. A piece of beefsteak is far more nourishing than a quantity of pease-pudding containing even a larger proportion of proteid material, because the former is far more digestible than the latter. And a small piece of dry, hard cheese, though of high nutritive value as judged by mere chemical analysis, will not satisfy the more subtile criticism of the stomach.'

We are reminded by the foregoing contradictory statements of the old saying that 'What is one man's meat (food) is another man's poison.' The powers of digestion vary, and while some people may thrive on uncooked grains and pulse, others may starve if they attempt to live upon such a diet. Every one must be a law unto himself. We have seen bright, intelligent, earnest young men abandon flesh and adopt vegetarian formulas and foods; but, while some succeeded in discovering what suited their constitutions and continued their vegetarian methods, the majority had to return to a mixed diet.

EAT TO LIVE, NOT LIVE TO EAT.

There can be little doubt that many people eat too fast and too often, and consequently eat too much, and add to the difficulties of digestion by failing to thoroughly masticate their food and by drowning it in the stomach with liquids of one sort or another; and Dr. Dewey advocates abstinence from food until midday, or until 'keen hunger' is felt, even if it is necessary to wait for days or weeks. He distinguishes between 'appetite' and 'hunger.' Appetite he regards as a fictitious and unhealthy prompting for food—mainly the result of habit—which arises in the stomach, and is often due to gas engendered by undigested food remaining there, which thus creates a false craving. Hunger, on the other hand, is experienced in the throat and mouth, and the keen desire for food makes its possessor feel as though he could eat and relish almost anything. Food should be wisely selected, thoroughly and slowly masticated, and kept in the mouth until all flavour has left it. By this process it is best prepared for the stomach to deal with it, and one gets the full pleasure of eating, and relishes the goodness of the flavour. Drink should not be taken at meals, nor within half an hour before or two hours after a meal, and it should be sipped rather than gulped down. Two meals a day will be found adequate to maintain perfect health and strength without stimulants or drugs of any description, and those who are making too much flesh will find the adoption of the plan of living outlined above a ready, easy, healthy way to reduce their substance, while those who are weak and wasted will develop to normal proportions, and gain vigour and elasticity.

Excessive attention to the question of food and drink (constant and anxious thought as regards when, what, how much or how little food shall be taken) is as great an error on the part of the vegetarian as the epicure. Both attach too much importance to what should be pleasant interludes in the daily round. 'Eat to live, not live to eat,' should be the

motto, and feeding should take its place as an incident, not an end.

DEEP BREATHING.

Too much time has been spent in looking everywhere *outside* ourselves for 'the Kingdom,' whereas the secret of life and strength is to be found *within*. We mainly create our conditions and environments by the thoughts we entertain, the habits we form, and the attitude of mind that we adopt—or to which we surrender. That the 'breath is the life' is even more true than the familiar adage, 'The blood is the life,' for is not the blood dependent upon the air we breathe for the oxygen which vitalises it? Nay, more; if, as we are assured, a psychical or etherial atmosphere permeates the whole universe, then right, deep breathing of pure air should not only strengthen us physically but stimulate and sustain us spiritually. One of the first essentials for this kind of breathing is that it should be *intentional*. The 'elixir of life' will be found by those who learn to breathe the vitalising breath by which energy is renewed, the brain nourished, the body strengthened, the will-power intensified, the magnetic power augmented and its restorative potency increased, so that they will be able to maintain their own health and dispense healing 'virtue to others.'

In his 'New Thought Essays,' Mr. Charles Brodie Patterson contends that physical exercise is of little benefit save as it becomes the vehicle for the expression of inner things. Strong, true, uplifting desire causes us to breathe strongly and deeply, while weak, vacillating, and false desires result in mere superficial breathing. The thought of anything black produces a restraining influence on the breath, while the thought of something white or yellow invariably tends to freedom in breathing. It is evident, he affirms, that the breath is affected by different mental emotions; thus hate or anger cause short quick breathing, while loving and peaceful thoughts are accompanied by deep, long breaths. It is there-

fore possible, through thought action alone, to effect a marked change in the circulation of the blood, but, with a mentally controlled and directed action of the breath, such a change may be more rapidly and effectually produced. This practice will also aid in the development of the power of mental concentration, and this is most important, because it is not so much the long, deep breath that gives the strong, true thought as it is the strong, true thought that gives the long, deep breath. Under controlled and directed action the breath penetrates, or circulates, among all the molecules of the body, and it will therefore be readily realised how important it is for all who desire to retain good health, or to regain it, that they should recognise the need for intentional and helpful deep breathing. And not only so for physical well-being, but as man grows more spiritual—as his desires become more centred in the inner conscious world—this practice of deep breathing will undoubtedly facilitate the development of the 'inner breathing' by which his psychical powers are liberated and his entrance into the 'superior state' is secured, in which condition he may be said to become 'a spirit among spirits,' and have the higher life opened to his aspiring and responsive soul.

Many teachers of the art of deep breathing are presenting their theories, and rules, and lessons to the world, and the student may possibly gather something helpful from each one; but the great requisite is to practise—again and again, and yet again—until, by the application of the mind to the task and the performance of the effort, beneficial results are realised in added power and confidence.

Of course the ideal to be attained is, correct breathing *all the time*, under all circumstances! But as this will follow as a matter of habit, after the preliminary work of overcoming the results of wrong methods of breathing has been accomplished, it may be necessary at first to have stated times in which to follow definite rules, until one becomes accustomed to the persistent, continuous, and natural process of deep breathing.

AUTO-SUGGESTION, OR THE MIND CURE.

Self-suggestion plays an important part in all mental and psychical processes—hence much more satisfactory health results will be attained, and spiritual evolution will be more rapid, if an expectant attitude is maintained. 'I know I cannot do it,' or, 'I do not believe it does much good,' are phrases which indicate the 'doubting Thomas' frame of mind, and doubt weakens the will, eats out the heart of Hope, and lays the victim open to enervating chills and consuming fevers; whereas a calm, confident, and expectant spirit is affirmative and gives the 'suggestion' of success which calls forth latent energy and accomplishes the desired good.

Many people unconsciously practise 'mind cure'—they simply *will not* be ill; they refuse to give in to the feelings of depression, lassitude, weakness, or pain, and struggle hopefully on, and in the end Nature responds to their call, and they grow well and strong. What some people do instinctively and without predetermination might be done by all intentionally and systematically. Drugs do not cure any more than splints heal a broken leg. The repairing and restorative powers are inherent in the spirit, and operate, under ordinary circumstances, *in*voluntarily; the mind or psychical cure, aims to assist Nature by auto-suggestion, by *voluntary* co-operation and control.

That the body affects our moods and influences our feelings is universally admitted, and the well-known answer to the question, 'Is life worth living?'—'That depends upon the liver,' embodies the popular conception of our mental subserviency to physical states; but in another sense it is equally true that the worth of life depends upon the liver—the manner of life of the individual; and in this sense the mind affects the body and can largely master its weaknesses. By well-directed and sustained mental application and the maintenance of an optimistic frame of mind, we may exert a healing and strengthening influence upon our organs, and tune up the whole system to a healthy state.

By adopting an affirmative and expectant attitude; by commanding the psychical forces and directing them to flow with positive power towards the particular organ or part of the body which is weak or diseased, we can do a great deal towards self-cure, especially if such self-suggestion is accompanied by deep breathing, daily baptism, temperate living, healthful exercise, cheerful company, and adequate rest.

THE BETTER WAY MUST BE FOLLOWED.

The mere denial of inharmonious conditions, or of disease, will not wipe them out. The assertion that 'all is good' will not make selfishness and vice lovely and of good repute, and nothing is to be gained by paltering with obvious facts or blinding oneself to their existence. We may think ourselves on to a higher plane, and, by using our soul forces, attune our natures so that to the pure all things are pure, and we may express the powers of the spirit. But, all the same, ignorance, sorrow, injustice, folly, misery, and vice are unwholesome conditions that abound in the world, and evil—to those who practise it and experience its dire penalties—is a very real fact. Selfishness and crime are not merely 'undeveloped good,' nor are they 'good in the making,' but are to be overcome and out-grown; and the better way of obedience to the law of love must be followed to secure health and happiness.

Probably one of the best methods of bringing the mind to its bearings, and the body into tune with the laws of right, will be found in a determination to possess the body instead of being governed by it—to live in it and delight in it; to enjoy its energy and bring it into healthy relations with the spiritual realm, and rejoice in the beautiful world of which it forms a part.

Far too many people go through life blind to its beauties and deaf to its harmonies, and conscious only of the 'slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,' when, by belief in themselves and knowledge of their own thought-power, they might

realise much of joy and find many occasions for thankfulness and delight. They have a kind of morbid twist or kink in their natures. They nurse their ailments and thrive in an atmosphere of gloom. They love to pour forth their complaints and enlarge upon their sufferings. They are only happy when they are miserable. They decline to be cured, because they long for sympathy, and worry others who serve them. They would complain if they were well, and because they had

'Nothing whatever to grumble at.'

As Horatio Dresser says, 'The mind is limited in power and must choose; for there is literally no room both for trouble and trust,' and these people, instead of heeding the motto: 'Never trouble trouble until trouble troubles you'—and then making short work of it—look upon themselves as so all-important that they try to have everything and everybody circulate around them; instead of trusting, and expressing, their inner powers of love and sympathy.

SELF-CURE BY WILL CULTURE AND THOUGHT POWER.

Those who are ill in body or mind may do a great deal for their own restoration to normal and healthy conditions by cultivating the health-habit-of-thought, by adopting an affirmative and cheery frame of mind. Instead of self-pity and coddling when ailing, one can accomplish great things by ignoring the pains and turning attention away from them. 'Oh! I'm all right!' is a self-suggestion that tends to tune up the nerves and induce a healthy condition.

The cultivation of the will, the calling up of the reserve forces in the system, the directing of the vital auras to the seat of the suffering, the centreing of the strong healing thought upon the afflicted part—at the same time breathing deeply, regularly, and hopefully—will go a long way towards effecting a cure.

Change of surroundings and occupations and companions will frequently prove effective in lifting the sufferer from

'the blues' into a happier frame of mind. So intimately are body and mind related, so closely do they act and re-act, that what helps one helps the other; but the mind is involved in all attempts to secure and preserve good physical health, because attention, interest, thought, concentration of energy, and strong desire are requisite if one is to be faithful in well-doing until the *habit is formed* and it becomes natural, easy, to be well, cheerful, patient, and true. Then it is possible to be healthy and happy automatically—spontaneously—without thinking about it or taking any pride in it; and psychical lucidity will increase, and activity upon the higher plane will be a source of strength and delight.

CONCENTRATION AND ABSTRACTION.

A great deal has been written of late in praise of concentration, and there is no doubt that it is indispensable to successful self-culture and the expression of one's own spirit. Business men find that they *have* to concentrate their energies and deal with one thing at a time. The ability to thus bring the mind to a point, to focalise the attention upon the work in hand, also requires that one should be able to abstract himself from his surroundings. This is being done every day by hosts of people who are unmoved, undisturbed in the midst of bustle and noise. By this means it is possible to isolate oneself and be alone in the midst of a crowd. It gives the power of self-mastery; the ability to select thoughts; to take things in detail; to evolve order out of confusion; to establish system; to train and discipline the will; to acquire lucidity; to hold an idea in mind—study it, contemplate it, and understand it before passing on to the next. It strengthens one's individuality, increases self-reliance, and develops firmness and decision of character. It will enable one to overcome moods and regulate impulses and acquire the art of attention to details.

By the practice of the art of concentration one may, by introspection, retire into himself and become so pre-occupied

on the inner plane of his consciousness as to be entirely oblivious to external surroundings. By this process of self-abstraction the outer senses are overcome and all the energies are centred upon the soul, which becomes intensely conscious and sensitive, and its powers of intuitive perception are liberated, and psychical experiences of a rich and varied character may be enjoyed. But it is not possible to be on the mountain-tops, breathing the rare atmosphere and surveying the golden landscapes of the higher life, all the time—such delights are the rewards for fidelity, and purity, and service, and cannot be expected continuously; they should act as stimulants to the performance of 'the daily round, the common task' of every-day life. While we are on this side we must not expect to be able to take the Kingdom of Heaven by force; we must keep touch with the world and maintain our equilibrium. Andrew Jackson Davis wisely says: 'It is right to think and meditate often and profoundly upon things spiritual and heavenly. But it is dangerous to keep your mind concentrated upon any subject so steadily and so protractedly that "you *cannot* think of anything else."' That way madness lies.

CHAPTER V.

PSYCHOMETRY, CLAIRVOYANCE, AND HEALING.

'Near to us, on the other side of a very thin veil, lies a great realm of life which has the closest connection with our own. What that connection is we at present only dimly discern. Our organs of perception seem only in the most rudimentary condition. It may be that our later indifference on this side has hindered their development. But develop they must, for they are amongst humanity's most priceless possessions.'—'CHRISTIAN WORLD.'

'The sight of the spiritual eye is a faculty which will be normally exercised when you are dead. At present it is a subjective or abnormal faculty. This subjective sight is a possibility of every human being, and under certain conditions it can be cultivated; this visual sensitiveness can be created whereby you may come into sympathetic relationship with subjective conditions and be able to discern them through the external faculties of the consciousness.'—J. J. MORSE.

IT will be readily admitted that for the most of us the range of our perceptions is not entirely limited to the effects produced by visible external phenomena, and that a great variety of sensations are experienced which cannot be traced, at least directly, to observation of occurrences in the ordinary physical surroundings. We are susceptible to influences which do not affect us through the senses, and yet they cause a quickening of thought, a clearness of mental vision, and an ability to sense or perceive the actuality of spiritual associations. This susceptibility is indicated by the well-known fact that many people upon their first introduction to others have an instinctive sense of attraction or repulsion. Sometimes there is a feeling of repulsion when, by all external indications, it would seem that the feeling should be just the

reverse. In some cases, after an acquaintance of but a few moments, the sympathy between two people is such that they feel as though they had known each other for years.

The curious premonitions which so frequently affect sensitives indicate the existence of powers, inherent in their nature, by which they may relate themselves to the great thought atmosphere which envelopes us all—the great sphere of causative forces which we but dimly recognise. Most people are more or less familiar with the feeling that something is going to happen; the sensation that something is 'in the air,' or, as it has been said, that 'coming events cast their shadows before them'; and Dr. J. M. Peebles, writing on this point, says: 'Visitors often call upon us while the air is yet vibrant with our earnest words concerning them. Approaching us they thought of us, and, thus thinking, they projected their thought along the interstellar waves of ether, which, impinging upon our aural thought-sphere, induced us to speak of them. Thought kindles thought. And so thought responds to thought as do notes on the musical scale to music.'

Just as one musician can give expression to the soul of harmony to an extent that others vainly endeavour to reach, so the aptitudes of people on the psychical plane vary. Some have natural psychometric power. They weigh, 'size up,' and measure the people with whom they come in contact almost at once. Their 'first impressions' are generally psychical or intuitive. Others are naturally clairvoyant, and have possessed the faculty from birth, but have been afraid to trust or exercise it. So, too, many speakers, although they never lose consciousness, are aware that they are impelled to say things they had not intended to utter, that ideas flow into their minds. These are all natural experiences, and everyone can more or less successfully develop and enjoy some one or other of the powers of spiritual perception. By study and effort one may become sufficiently sensitive to respond consciously to the psychical conditions of objects, places, or persons, and

sufficiently expert to eliminate foreign influences and perceive the quality and character of the especial aura of a given article or of an individual.

THE VIBRATORY THEORY.

It is believed by many thinkers that a subtile spiritual ether pervades the whole universe; that it is by means of the vibrations of this omnipresent substance, fluid, or force, that thought impulses are transmitted from one consciousness to another. It is suggested that just as the sensations which we experience, and denominate light, heat, colour, and sound, are due to wave motions of the atmosphere of varying length, rapidity, and intensity, so those people who are sympathetic and 'open' to certain mental states may be affected by, and respond to, the wave-motions of the spiritual ether that are due to the thought impulses from active thinkers who are upon the same plane, or of a like order.

If this theory be true, and it seems to be the one which will best cover the ground of the observed facts, we are bathing in an ocean whose waves are continually surging around, upon,and through us, and we may be unconsciously responding to influences which set us thrilling with hope and inspiration, with passion or despair. When once the key-note of our being is touched, whether physical, mental, moral, or spiritual, we shall vibrate in unison with the impulses that enter our psychical sphere, and therefore we need to learn how to pitch the key and strike the tune; how to give direction to the currents, and dominate, instead of being dominated by, these unseen but potent environings.

It is further held that the human spirit is a centre of potential energy—an Intelligence that can cultivate the ability to draw upon and utilise the etheric, or spiritual, forces that pervade the universe—and radiates auric emanations which are healthful or injurious, moral or debasing, spiritual or gross, according to the degree of unfoldment of the higher self that has been attained; and that these impalpable

potencies are substantial on the psychical plane to the cultivated senses of those who are gifted enough to perceive them.

Mrs. Denton, one of the most remarkable psychometric sensitives, has suggestively asked: 'Are we absolutely certain that sounds can be conveyed to the human ear *only* by the atmosphere, or by some outward, tangible substance?' She suggests that 'some fluid, infinitely more refined than is our atmosphere, conducts to our interior sense of hearing vibrations which the atmosphere fails to convey to the ear'; and she further supposes that 'all matter retains in a latent condition whatever force may hitherto have been applied to it, and that by the perception of these latent conditions, the psychometer may, when this faculty shall become more fully developed, arrive at the facts of all past time.' She adds that usually, in her own case at least, these sounds are *perceived* rather than *heard*.

SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION.

All consciousness of ordinary sensation through the five senses is in reality Perception. Psychometric perception is a spiritual process—it is first-hand cognition of the soul by the soul. It is the perception and interpretation of those vibrations which produce sensation in the inner self and touch the soul-side of us directly. By this means we can indeed exercise the gift of 'discerning' the spirits (minds and dispositions) of men; and by the extension of the same soul faculties we may veritably become clairvoyant and see spirit people, and exercise a beneficent influence upon those who come within our sphere.

The cultivation of these powers of the soul should prove of great advantage to the student of the laws of being, and even to the ordinary person, as he would be enabled to practically apply the knowledge gained in many ways in the avocations of a busy life. The psychometric power of soul-sensing would enable its possessor to perceive the real thought

and purpose of those with whom he had business transactions, and any attempts at double dealing could be frustrated or discounted by him.*

THE PSYCHICAL TEMPERAMENT.

Persons of a highly-strung nervous organisation, with large perceptive faculties and good 'language,' make the best psychometrists. They need what the phrenologists call the organs of ideality and sublimity well developed to render them impressionable. Phlegmatic, positive people seldom visualise, and are not likely to develop the power of receptivity to impalpable 'influences.'

PSYCHOMETRY.

The psychometrist runs little or no risk of danger or of injury to himself from the auras of other persons, provided he guards against noxious influences and avoids mixed conditions. Letters, clothes, hair, coins, ornaments, or jewels—in fact, almost any article which has belonged to, or been worn by, its possessor for any length of time, will suffice to enable the sensitive to relate himself to, and catch impressions of, the personal sphere of that individual. Some psychics succeed better with certain kinds of articles than with others. Metals are not good conductors—if we may use that term—to some operators; but, while minerals are unsatisfactory to them, they are especially favourable to others. Thus some psychometers are good character readers, others are successful in the diagnosis of diseases; some can read the book of Nature, while to others it is a sealed volume, or nearly so, but they are able to gauge the mental qualifications of their subjects, while others

* Mr. A. Morton says in 'Psychic Studies': 'Many detectives have gained reputations for keenness of perception and skilfulness in their pursuits, whose success was owing to the directions obtained through clairvoyant mediums; and many physicians have gained renown for their skill in correctly diagnosing obscure cases from information gained through the examinations made by psychometric mediums.'

realise their moral qualities and spiritual states. Some read the Past and enter into the Present states or conditions of their 'clients,' while others are successful in exercising prophetical prevision. These differences may be modified and the boundaries of the perceptive power may be extended by self-study, experiment, and culture; but every seer has his qualifications and his limitations; one will succeed where another may fail; hence it is well and wise for each one to discover what he *can* do, what sphere he can best occupy, and endeavour to fill it.

COMMUNITY OF SENSATION.

A psychometrist may, by holding a letter in his hand or putting it to his forehead, be able to perceive and delineate the personal appearance of the writer, 'take on' his conditions, describe his feelings and thoughts to such an extent as to identify himself with him and feel, for the time being, as if he *is* the writer; he may even tell what is written in the letter although unable to see the writing.

Human hair is found by some psychometrists to give them the best means of coming into touch with their subjects, and should, it is said, be cut from the head just behind the ears, as close to the scalp as possible. We have heard of instances in which other than human hair has been sent to psychics, and while in some cases the trick has been detected, in others 'readings' have been sent in good faith. Under such circumstances the sender cannot complain if he gets back what he sends: he deals falsely with the psychic quite as much as if he lied to him, and if he gets an erroneous reply the responsibility is his own; but even though the hair of an animal may be sent, it is quite possible that the psychic may, through its agency, establish relations with the person who sends it, and correctly trace his 'life-line.' Still, it is not a fair test, and we should advise the investigator to be honest and frank if he wishes to get truthful results.

It not infrequently happens that a psychic gets upon the

wrong trail, so to speak, and especially so when the inquirer is suspicious, or when there is a mixture of influences. A fan, passed by a lady to a sitter in the front row at a meeting, and held by the latter for a few minutes while waiting for an opportunity to hand it up to the psychic, led to a blending of auras which resulted in a 'description' which was said by the owner of the fan to be 'only partly correct'; but the gentleman by whom the fan had been handled exclaimed, 'I fully recognise the part of the description which the lady does not admit—it applies to *me* perfectly.' Hence the necessity for care in providing articles for psychics. A ring, for instance, which has been in the family for generations and handed on from one to another, may afford such a blending of influences that the sensitive will be unable to feel clearly each distinct individuality.

What a safeguard it would be to children as they grew in years, and came into contact with the world, if their psychometrical powers had been carefully trained, and they were able to detect the motives (in part, if not in full) of their companions and business associates. Parents are generally desirous that their children should have good and suitable companions, and many mothers especially have an instinctive feeling as to the advisability of fostering or repressing childish friendships; but how much better it would be if both parents and children were able to sense clearly the real nature and degree of morality of those with whom they were brought into contact.

CONDITIONS FOR THE SITTER.

The person who sits for the psychometrist to give him a 'reading' should not be antagonistic nor frivolous, neither should he desire special information, nor concentrate his thought forces upon any given point, otherwise he may dominate the sensitive, and by 'suggestion' mislead him, or only receive a reflex of his own hopes or fears. He will do well to preserve

an open mind, and an impartial but sympathetic attitude, and await results. It is unwise to interrupt, explain, or question during the time that a delineation is being given, for by so doing the psychic sphere is disturbed and the thought projections act like the breezes upon the surface of a lake, producing confused and distorted appearances. It is best to allow the description to be given in its entirety before asking questions regarding any of its details; it is quite probable that the very points upon which inquiries seem necessary will be more fully elucidated before the close. If a *special* 'reading,' and not a general one, is required—say, for diagnosis of disease conditions—a hint of what is desired at the outset should be sufficient.

CLAIRVOYANCE.

The power of visualising is one of the most striking evidences of man's psychical nature and possibilities. It is the creative faculty, by means of which we think things into existence. It is a distinctly spiritual capacity allied to intuition—or cognition; it is a species of inner vision—introvision—and is the power of the soul that is employed in clairvoyance. By its aid we can call up before the mind's eye that which has as yet no external existence, and image forth ideas and designs born in the consciousness—or borne upon and into the consciousness from the spiritual side. Clairvoyance is in reality, for the most part, spiritual perception—feeling. Mrs. Denton speaks of the light by which she was able to see psychometrically as 'latent light.' The same thing is probably meant by the Theosophists when they speak of 'astral light,' and by others who designate it 'etheric light,' but by giving it a name we do not analyse or define it. William Denton claimed that rays of light continually emanate from all objects, readily pass through most, if not all, substances, and proceed at once to the brain of sensitives and give the sensation of vision without the intervention of the eye. This refined light, he says, 'passes at once through the

portals and is admitted into the inner chambers of the soul.' Mrs. Denton says:—

'While ordinary vision requires light, either direct or reflected from some luminous body, to enable it to distinguish objects within its range, the other (the inner sight) finds a pebble no larger than a common pea sufficient to light up a world, while we read the myriad pages of its thrilling history. . . . In some instances, the impression appears to be made directly upon the brain, and when the individual (psychometrist) has learned to discriminate between these direct impressions and the creations of fancy, or the workings of imagination, they may be considered equally reliable with true vision.'

According to Mrs. Denton, then, it would appear that clairvoyant perceptions can be experienced by different processes—by sight and by impression. The extended vision enjoyed by some seers has been likened to a 'telescopic eye,' and seems to point to a power of perception by sympathetic relationship, as is the case in thought-transference. In other instances experience points to 'travelling' clairvoyance, in which the percipient psychically visits the distant place and describes what is witnessed. As the clairvoyant sees with spiritual vision, physical matter offers no obstruction. It is, in other words, perfectly transparent to spiritual light. Space is not a factor in this form of perception, in which nearness or distance depend upon spiritual conditions.

THE BRAIN ASLEEP, BUT THE SPIRIT ACTIVE.

William Denton regarded the spirit as the agent, and not the brain, in the phenomena associated with clairvoyance when the seer was in the mesmeric sleep, and quoted Dr. Hammond to the effect that: 'During sleep the brain is in a comparatively bloodless condition, and the blood in the encephalic vessels is not only diminished in quantity, but moves with diminished rapidity.'

'If the brain,' argued Denton, 'is the agent concerned in clairvoyant and clairaudient phenomena, its power being very much reduced by sleep, we should naturally expect that sleep would decrease or destroy its ability in this direction; but the very opposite seems to be the case; for many who possess no clairvoyant power in the waking condition have, in sleep, a remarkable development of it,' and he cited instances which seem to prove 'that the brain, which, as is now well known, is contracted in sleep, and therefore less fitted for obtaining ideas, cannot be the agent in clairvoyance, but it must be the all-seeing spirit. Mesmerism induces, generally, a state of still deeper sleep than the ordinary, and therefore less fitted for the action of the brain; and yet in just that proportion does it seem to be favourable for the exercise of clairvoyance and its accompanying phenomena; and when the deepest sleep is secured by magnetism, and the eye is no longer sensitive to light, the ear to sound, and the skin to touch, it is then that these peculiar powers are most frequently and clearly manifested, as nearly all writers on mesmerism testify. . . In death-trance, when even the circulation is stopped, and respiration can no longer be perceived; when the pallor of death overspreads the countenance, and death itself is so well counterfeited that it is hardly possible to distinguish the one from the other, the spirit asserts its superiority and independence; it hears, sees, feels, and obtains knowledge that, out of this trance-state, the individual is unable to obtain.' This is 'just what we should expect if the spirit is to survive death; but it is altogether inexplicable if death is to extinguish us.'

EXPLANATORY THEORIES.

Endeavouring to explain how clairvoyance is effected, Mr. Leadbeater argues that it is possible to see by means of what he calls an astral current, or rather, to polarise the astral particles by emitting, by the exercise of the will, a kind of electric flash so as to construct a sort of psychic wire or astral telescope that one can look along, and from his own end discern the objects in miniature; or by the projection of a thought-form or an astral image of oneself into the presence of the person who is thought of. Ordinary thought is, as a

stone thrown from the hand, cut off from the thrower; but in this case the connection is maintained, and the thought-form is used to see with, and the seer is thus enabled to see at the other end of the line, and the figures would be life-size. The clairvoyant in some instances sees by means of the astral body itself. In these cases the seer actually goes to the place or the person, and on his return describes what he has observed; but he would be in an unconscious state while he was thus active on the inner plane. As a rule some kind of link is required; the seer must know where, or to whom, to direct his telescope, but in this latter class of vision he could go and find a place or person that he had never seen or visited.

'Some people begin by a plunge, as it were, and under some unusual stimulus, become able, just for once, to see some striking vision; and very often in such a case, because the experience does not repeat itself, the seer comes in time to believe that on that occasion he must have been the victim of hallucination. Others begin by becoming intermittently conscious of the brilliant colours and vibrations of the human aura; and yet others find themselves with increasing frequency seeing and hearing something to which those around them are blind and deaf; others, again, see faces, landscapes, or coloured clouds floating before their eyes in the dark before they sink to rest; while, perhaps, the commonest experience of all is that of those who begin to recollect with greater and greater clearness what they have seen and heard on the other planes during sleep.' In reference to crystal-gazing, he says: 'It does not seem to matter much what is used as a focus, except that pure crystal has an undoubted advantage over other substances, in that its peculiar arrangement of elementary essence renders it specially stimulating to the psychic faculties.'*

SPECULATIONS OF LITTLE AVAIL.

We are inclined to agree with an American writer who said:—

'As yet, we can only speculate as to clairvoyance. Once,

* 'Clairvoyance.' By C. W. LEADBEATER.

before I could see anything clairvoyantly, I was required to shut my eyes. Now I see fully as well but much less often with my eyes wide open, and it appears to me that all my visions are optical. A few years ago I had a theory, but a couple of mediums spoiled it for me very suddenly one day. I was explaining discerning of spirits as spirit sight which was thrown upon the perceptive faculties and thence vibrated through the brain, till the clairvoyant became conscious of it. But a medium told me then and there that all her observations were from the solar plexus, and another medium informed me that she saw spirits also from the solar plexus. Because the hypothesis is novel is no reason for condemning it.'

Clairvoyants, mesmeric, normal and mediumistic, have variously declared that they saw, or seemed to do so, through the top of the head, at the finger tips, at the pit of the stomach, through the forehead, at the back of the head, with the ordinary eyes, or with an interior sight; and who can say them nay?

CLAIRVOYANCE ON DIFFERENT PLANES.

There seems to be a diversity of modes of consciousness of these perceptual impressions or sensations—different planes of clairvoyance. Some seem to see with the mind's eye, to visualise, others to become conscious of the opening of their inner vision, and Dr. Andrew Jackson Davis says:—

'In consequence of the departure of the element of sensation from the surface of the body, the latter is left in a death-like, senseless, profound slumber, and in proportion as the body is darkened the mind is enlivened. When the forehead is illuminated it is perfectly transparent. It appears like a window from which the soul looks out upon the fields of creation. All the upper portions of the face, including the bodily eyes, are also illuminated. Good clairvoyants, however, are generally not illuminated in the highest regions of the brain, but only in the base of the cerebrum, extending from the centre of the forehead to either side and

downward to the top of the cheek bones. This is the source or locality of the mental perceptions. Clairvoyance implies the clear perception of things beyond the powers of the bodily vision, but it does not imply understanding all the things observed. The organs of perception are particularly excited by the flow of the sensational medium into them. The vision extends in straight lines when distance is subjected to contemplation, and yet as with the bodily eyes, the interior perceptions harmonise very readily with the rays of light and electricity, which play abroad in nature, so that the vision usually comprehends fully half of a very large disc.'

MAGNETIC HEALING.

Healing by the laying on of hands is an ancient method of restoring the sick, and differs from hypnotism in that the patient is not put to sleep; and from mesmerism in that no will power or gazing are needed; and from massage in that no rubbing or kneading is employed.

Many students of spiritual therapeutics believe that there is a universal force, ether, life principle or aura which pervades all things, and that when the healer can relate himself consciously to this power and vibrate in unison with it, he feels it flow through him to others as an energy which establishes in them new conditions of health. Whether any fluid 'virtue' or force—magnetic or vital—passes from the healer to his patient, or whether it is only a wave or vibratory motion that is set up and communicated from one to the other, is a matter which is yet in dispute. Many people attribute the results to 'suggestion' on the part of the operator, and expectancy, or faith, on the part of the subject; but, as a writer has expressed it: 'If suggestion can produce an effect it is as much a positive force as electricity, and passes from one terminal to another.'

We have experienced extreme exhaustion after treating the sick, and have felt thoroughly 'used up,' while the sufferer has been conscious of a great increase of his vital force; and if the testimony of clairvoyants counts for any-

thing, there *are* auric emanations which pass from the healer and are absorbed by the patient. Upon this point the following selection from the teachings given to 'M.A. (Oxon.)' by his spirit instructors, and published in 'Light,' will be interesting: '*In the mesmeric passes is a force conveyed from the operator to the patient, or not?*' Answer: 'Assuredly. A stream of vital force is conveyed; as you may prove by the fact that a *rapport* is established between the two, so that the operator will frequently carry away the ailment which he cures, only in a milder form. And he will surely convey to the patient any pain under which he chances to be suffering. Hence care should be taken that only healthy operators should be allowed.'

We have seen magnetic healers, who before visiting their patients were full of buoyant strength and spirits, return from a treatment that was unduly prolonged looking haggard and ill and thoroughly exhausted. They had certainly, in some way, parted with considerable vitality and were fit only to sleep and thus recuperate and replenish their stock of energy. Herr Reichel states that recent investigations on the part of leading Continental students on this subject have experimentally proved that the magnetic radiations of mankind have an objective appearance, and he further contends that 'suggestion' can only be effective 'when the receiver's brain has a quantity of vital power at its disposal which can be guided by the suggestion to the seat of disease.' Dr. von Stuckrad says, and his testimony upon this point is borne out by many others: 'I am convinced that by direct contact of the magnetiser's hands on the patient a stimulating and agreeable influence is felt which can be compared to a strong stream on the nervous system. I experience a feeling of increased warmth under the palms of the hands, which then quickly spreads on all sides if the hands are applied to the back by the spinal column or on the pit of the stomach.' *

* 'Light.'

Some people are natural centres of magnetic power. They generate an abundance of vital energy, and can afford to dispense their 'virtue' for the benefit of those who are sick without injury—nay, with positive benefit to themselves—provided that excessive demands are not made upon their forces. No one should attempt to heal another when exhausted and weary, nor when sad and depressed. Given an operator whose heart is in his work; who believes in the influence of mind over mind, mind over body; who is, himself, vitally vigorous and healthy in constitution; who puts all his benevolent energies out for the purpose of cure; and given a subject who needs treatment and possesses those elements of fitness or receptivity necessary to success, there seems to be no limit to the useful possibilities and beneficial applications of the healing art.

The healer is positive to his patient, and by simply applying his hands to the nerve centres of the sufferer's body, or by making local, or full length, 'passes' as he may feel is necessary, or be 'impressed' to do, he imparts to him some of his own psychic force, or the vitalising principle of life, which tends to cleanse, stimulate, and strengthen the sufferer. It is confidently asserted by experienced practitioners that they do really 'give off' vital power, which is felt by the recipient as a stimulating influence that operates like a tonic upon the nervous system.

The true healer must be unselfish, sympathetic, and benevolent. He may have to 'minister to a mind diseased' before he can heal the bodily infirmities. He will need to be tactful, delicate, yet firm, and devoted with loving enthusiasm to his work, so that by the contagion of his example as well as his influence he may be a tower of strength to those who seek his aid. He can calm the sufferer; allay his fears; stimulate his faith; suggest thoughts of strength, and thus arouse hope, expectancy, response, and set his self-curative forces at work to restore him to normal health and cheer.

In spiritual healing, according to Horatio Dresser, there is

no reasoning, no attempt to transfer definite thoughts, and *no effort to control or hypnotise the mind of the patient.* It is rather the healer's place to bring down a gentle, soothing atmosphere about the patient, from which the latter shall absorb according to his need and receptivity. The spiritual healer is not himself the all-powerful mind or factor, he is the willing instrument of the higher Power. His desire is to become spiritually open and free: then to induce the same state in the patient. The first step is to direct the consciousness towards the Omnipresent Spirit, to become peaceful, quiet, poised, *master of the situation.* When one is thus open and free, one may turn to the sufferer, and in the same gentle, yet strong and stimulating spirit, envelope him with an atmosphere so powerful that no inharmonious condition of mind or body can long withstand it. The healer is like the person with good sight who offers kindly assistance to the blind man. One should not dwell on symptoms and doubts, but see the *outcome*, think of the patient as he *ought to be*, in good health, poised, calm, and strong.

There is great need of healers who understand the nature of the laws of spirit association and the character of the influences that the 'dweller on the threshold' throws upon those who are susceptible to his thought-power. Many persons, by their strong desires, their passional or affectional longings, unknowingly attract, or offer favourable conditions to, spirits of this class (not necessarily *evil*, but ignorant, and living on the plane of desire and self), who attach themselves to them, to their hurt; and there is a wide field of usefulness here for healers who can set these sufferers free, and not only 'preach to' but teach these 'spirits in prison,' so that they will no longer remain in darkness, but set out upon their pilgrimage to higher spiritual states.

CHAPTER VI.

PRACTICAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR PSYCHICAL UNFOLDMENT.

'By many routes, we are now arriving at the conclusion that the inner self has powers which can, at times, far transcend the outer self, and even master it, as the merest instrument. The outer self may, at times, be utterly beaten and useless, but the inner self may console, and wing its glorious way and sing.'—'LIGHT.'

'By persistent experiment and the frank expression of the thoughts, feelings, sights, or impulses that he experiences, the seeker after clairvoyance or psychometry will gradually become sensitive, lucid, and eventually be clearly able to distinguish between what are purely unrestrained works of imagination (or fictions) and the impressions and perceptions which have spiritual warrant and a basis of fact.'—B. G. E.

A VARIETY of 'directions' for the cultivation of psychical perception have been published, but unless you possess the natural, organic, temperamental sensitiveness you are not likely to realise satisfactory results without prolonged effort. True, the power may lie dormant in your nature; it may have been neglected, misunderstood, and crushed, and in such a case your latent 'gifts' will soon become active if you persist in your endeavours to understand and use them, but unless you are prepared to seriously and steadily devote yourself to the task of your own education on these lines, do not waste your time or strength in dabbling with the subject.

Spiritualists have not yet realised their duty in the matter of providing training schools and teachers for the development of sensitives, consequently it devolves upon each one to endeavour to train himself.

THOUGHT TRANSFERENCE.

As a rule, thoughts can only be transferred from one person to another as a result of the exercise of will by the operator,

and if you can obtain the assistance of a few friends to try what is called the 'willing game,' you may soon ascertain if you are responsive to their thoughts and telepathically conscious of their wishes; or whether you are sufficiently positive to transfer your own thoughts to someone else.

One of the party, having been chosen to act as the 'subject,' should be requested to retire from the room, and during his absence an article should be selected for the purpose of this experiment.

The subject having been recalled, one member of the company, acting as spokesman, should say: A certain article in this room has been fixed upon, and we are all thinking of it, and 'willing' you to touch it. We want you to render your mind passive; to follow whatever impulse you experience, and touch the first article upon which you feel impelled to place your hand.

This experiment may be varied in a number of ways. For instance, the subject may be willed to touch one of the sitters; to take something to a certain person; to discover a hidden article, &c.

Each one should concentrate his thoughts upon the subject, willing him to proceed to, and touch, the article selected for that purpose.

The sitters should not look at the article, although they may at the 'subject,' but should not touch him or make any sign or movement that would in any way give him a clue.

The 'subject' will find it best to stand still (and, if he prefers to do so, close his eyes), until some inclination, 'drawing,' or prompting impels him to move. Some people readily respond and are successful at once. Others are rather too self-conscious and nervous at first, but succeed when those feelings wear off. Others expect too definite and decided an impression, and do not obey the first impulse, lest it should be their own mind operating, and in that way they become confused, and fail.

By this simple means it is possible to find out those who

are impressionable, and then more systematic experiments can be made with a smaller number of sitters, say three, who might act as operator, subject, and note-taker alternately (or as agent, percipient, and recorder), until they ascertain, as the result of the experiments, which of the three is the most susceptible and which is the most positive.

The agent needs to possess the power of visualising and concentration. Thinking of a definite number, figure, name, or colour, he must picture it in his mind as though he could see it, and then try to project the picture that he has thus imagined to the percipient, and enable him to see it also. This is by no means an easy operation. It requires steady thought, concentrated purpose, and the expenditure of considerable psychical energy.

It is unwise to fidget and strain and insist, and make repeated mental affirmations; such methods tend to destroy the placidity which is so essential to success. A steady, concentrated, and expectant frame of mind should be maintained, as a more definite mental picture and a more continuous mind wave can thus be produced than by spasmodic, vehement willing.

Should the mind of either the agent or the percipient be taken up by an intense desire to *succeed*, the experiment is likely to result in failure, for the simple reason that the mind is so pre-occupied with the *desire* that it is unable to convey or receive the impression.

SELF-PREPARATION BY ABSTRACTION.

To enable you to see, hear, and feel on the psychical side of your nature, it is necessary that you should understand how to abstract yourself from your surroundings and shut yourself off from the sensuous consciousness, and close yourself against the reports of the external senses. You will need to banish hurry, worry, and care, and cease to be mentally active. Just as the sincere worshipper assumes a reverential attitude and gives the conditions for spiritual communion and

exaltation, so you will need to retire into your spiritual self and 'wait upon the Lord' with calm confidence and aspiration, and then you will by-and-by experience the opening up of your inner consciousness and intuitively cognise soul states, become interiorily *aware* of, or psychometrically feel, impressions and influences, and clairvoyantly perceive spiritual auras or personages. By thus inhibiting all sense impressions, you will experience the peace on the outer plane which precedes the intense activity of the psychical self in the 'superior condition.' The mesmerist induces this outward quietude in his subject, and suspends the ordinary operations of the senses, before he awakens his powers of receptivity and response on the inner side of his being. The spirit operator does the same thing with his medium before he can appeal to his soul's powers and induce clairvoyance or inspire him with new and wise thoughts. What others can enable you to do you may learn to accomplish for yourself, even though fasting and prayer, temporary retirement and meditation, may be necessary. You may thus be able to penetrate to the spiritual realm and 'discern' spiritual states, conditions, and personages, and rejoice in the observation and interpretation of the realities of the 'other side' of this wonderful universe, aye, even to the exercise of the power to travel 'in the spirit' and clairvoyantly cognise the glories of that land where dwells the soul serene.

CONDITIONS TO BE OBSERVED.

It is advisable to set aside half an hour a day, and take precautions to prevent any interruption.

Sit facing the south in a semi-darkened room, between 10 and 11 a.m. if convenient, or about 7 or 8 p.m. Be punctual. Sit regularly. Think of the object in view, viz., your desire to cultivate receptivity to impressions, responsiveness to thought influences or psychic emanations, and clairvoyant perceptions. A shaded light, or a very low one, will minimise your consciousness of light-vibrations and reduce the tendency

to use your eyes, and it is advisable sometimes to close them. Your garments should be so arranged as to afford unimpeded circulation and respiration, and give free play to the muscles of the chest and abdomen.

Your chair should be comfortable, so that you can sit with your feet resting on the floor; and your body erect and easy, that your mind may not be aroused by recognising and overcoming discomfort.

Devote your whole attention to the subject in hand. If you are anxious, worried, or preoccupied about other matters it will be necessary to try to withdraw your thoughts from external things into the inner realm of your consciousness; to banish every resentful, disturbing, or uncharitable thought, and feel kindly and lovingly towards everyone. You will find that you cannot at once become quiescent, and must therefore be patient, for it is not easy to dismiss a thought at will. Change the thought currents by substituting a new subject for contemplation, and lead the mind by successive stages to a condition of pleasurable anticipation. Endeavour to attain, and maintain, a calm and serene condition of consciousness; yet you must be alert to respond to and interpret the vibrations that stir the soul atmosphere, that you may distinguish the different notes, tones, voices, and echoes.

You have to learn to *feel* with *all* the senses of your soul; to perceive the true inwardness of things and people; to see with your inner vision; to be 'absent-minded' on the outer plane, so that you may thrill with, and respond to, the visions, voices, and verities of the soul sphere into which you penetrate.

HOW TO CULTIVATE PSYCHOMETRIC POWER.

Articles belonging to other persons, specimens or cherished curios will be suitable for you to experiment with, provided you are unacquainted with their antecedents. Sometimes you will feel as if you are groping in the dark; the influence is weak and you cannot sense it; you are undecided, vacillat-

ing, and unable to penetrate the surroundings. That may be characteristic of the person with whom you are dealing, therefore you should mention your difficulties, and you may then get nearer.

Repeated efforts will be necessary to enable you to realise how far what you think or perceive is the result of imagination, and how far it can be credited to the activity of the psychometric power. Do not ask questions. Once you are upon the trail, follow it. State definitely what comes to you, or what you *think* comes to you. Do not allow interruptions or questions. Go right through to the end, *then* ask if you are right. Never mind if you are wrong, try again and again, and if you have the power it will assuredly grow. Speak boldly, affirmatively. Reach out mentally to take hold of what you want; demand it, not anxiously, but confidently.

When you receive a letter from a person whose character is unknown to you, remove the envelope, and without reading the contents take it in your hands or place it to your forehead, and try to centre your thought upon the writer, to glean the purport of the communication and the spirit in which it was written. If you fail to receive any thought or feeling—any impulse or mental picture—after several minutes, put the letter to your temple or the back of your head. Hold it in your left hand only, or the right hand, or between them both if necessary, until you find which position suits you and enables you to form the circuit and 'switch on' to the writer.

You may experience sensations of antipathy, of pain, anxiety, anger, or gloomy foreboding. You may, on the other hand, feel attracted, happy, buoyant, and strong. *Whatever* your sensations are, mention them. They may come like a flash or only piecemeal. You may have to speak of one thing before the next thought comes, or you may feel that you cannot express them fast enough for fear you should lose the contact before you can complete your description. In all cases tell what you can as well as you are able, and leave

the results. If you find that you are fairly correct you will feel encouraged; but if you have not succeeded do not be discouraged—'I *can* and I *will*' should be your attitude.

It is unwise to experiment with handkerchiefs (you do not wish to delineate the laundress), or gloves (because of the mixed influences they are almost certain to carry); but if you do try with a glove, let it be the left one, and turn it inside out while you hold it.

Rings or personal articles which are in frequent use are generally best for individual 'readings.' Do not expect a very *decided* impulse, as though an idea had been *forced* into your consciousness from an external source; it may be but a very slight feeling, or a thought may 'come into your head,' or bubble up, so to speak, into your mind. Whatever it may be, speak of it, and the friend whose article you hold will be able to tell you if it has any significance or applicability.

One curious feature of this phase of perception is the fact that the psychometrist frequently feels compelled to use figures of speech and to employ metaphors which are intelligible only to his visitor. Consequently you may be prompted to say things which you cannot comprehend, which, without the key, seem meaningless and foolish. Do not let that worry you or deter you from being obedient to your impression—let your client interpret what you say for himself. When you have finished with one article or person, always blow off the influence, or throw it off, from your hands before you proceed to the next. Dismiss the first from your mind, close up the connection, and then you will be ready for the second.

Another kind of experiment may be made with books, by opening one at random and laying the right hand upon its pages, and trying to get some idea, before looking at it, of the words used or thoughts expressed on the page, or pages, thus covered. If you can experiment with an individual, take his hands in yours and endeavour to penetrate his conditions, whether of mind or body, or to perceive what he is thinking.

Or you might ask someone who is sympathetic to frame a mental question, and try to get an answer thereto. Take up photographs of strangers when you have the opportunity and notice if any thought comes to you as to the characteristics, temperament, health, business, or disposition of the individual, and then make inquiries to ascertain if your impressions are correct.

After you have made some few experiments, if you have had evidences that you possess psychometric power, you might, as opportunity arises, endeavour to 'sense' the purposes of callers, and of your associates generally. Form a question in your mind clearly and quickly, such as, 'What have you come for?' or, 'What favour do you wish to ask?' and then take notice whether you realise any thought, however slight, which has any bearing upon their purpose or business.

When professions of friendship are made you might ask, mentally, 'Do you mean it?' or, 'How much do you feel of what you say?' It will not be wise, however, to act upon the thoughts or feelings you may experience in this way, until, through repeated experiments, you are convinced that they are reliable. The difficulty of rightly interpreting the feelings; of realising the exact nature of the influences that affect you; of discriminating between your own sensations and those which are aroused by the conditions with which you come into contact, is one which can only be overcome by repeated experiments and watchfulness, and it will gradually disappear as you proceed. It may be that the realisation of the conditions to be described will come upon you suddenly; they will open up from within. Or it may be that you will 'take on' the influences and experience the sensations of your subject in your own person, so much so that you will feel as if you *are* the individual with whom you have become sympathetically and psychically related: his pains will be felt by you; his troubles will be your troubles; his thoughts and feelings, fears or hopes, will have been transferred to you; and you may succeed in giving a diagnosis of his physical,

mental, moral, and spiritual conditions that will prove to him that you have been 'reading' his soul-states in very truth.

Many sensitives hinder their development by being over-anxious. They are so afraid of saying anything that may be wrong that their very fears disturb their psychical conditions, and either prevent *all* perception, or distort the mental picture. We have frequently heard psychics say, 'I *felt* I wanted to do—or say—so-and-so, but I didn't like to for fear it should be wrong.' They have afterwards been very mortified when they have learnt that what they refused to do or say was the very thing that ought to have been given by them. Speak of what you feel when making these experiments; do what you are prompted to do, even if it seems foolish or ridiculous; never mind if it is not quite correct. You did not learn to walk without many mis-steps, and you will not become a successful psychometrist unless you are prepared to 'draw a bow at a venture'—to 'hazard a shot'—as it will seem to you,—aye, willing at the outset to be more often wrong than right.

Experiments may be made with relics, geological specimens, metals, chemicals, drugs, and medicines, to ascertain their effects for scientific purposes of investigation, and careful records should be kept; but we should not recommend you to engage in proceedings of this kind merely out of idle curiosity. It is generally difficult for a psychometrist to 'sense' *closed* letters successfully, as direct contact seems to be necessary in most cases; and so-called 'test' packages are difficult to deal with because of the atmosphere of doubt and mistrust in which they are enveloped by the sender. This may account for instances where psychometrists have been misled by unspoken as well as audible 'suggestions' from their clients, and you will need to be on your guard against this possibility.

The most practical and beneficent sphere for the exercise of the psychometrical faculty is its use for the diagnosis of

disease. Experiments for this kind of transference of sensation should be carefully conducted, so as not to exhaust yourself or 'take on' the morbid conditions of the sufferer to an injurious extent.

Hold your patient's hand and try to establish a sympathetic *rapport* with him, so that you can sense or see and delineate his conditions. Probably you will feel his pains in your own body, and thus be able to locate the seat of the disease. Many psychics see the auric conditions of their patients, and can tell by the colour of their emanations, or of the psychic counterparts of their organs, where they suffer and what is the cause of their illness.

Tell your visitors what you feel to be the truth, but use your own discretion. It may be necessary to withhold *some* things. Do not be merely a prophet of evil. Exert your influence on the side of hope, health, and goodness. Encourage the weak, the weary, and the sad. Admonish gently; condemn no one. While you should deplore wrong-doing, try to prompt and help the wrong-doers to better motives, purer purposes, and nobler deeds.

If you 'take on' the aches and pains of your subject be careful to 'will' them away. Make demagnetising passes over yourself and throw off the influence. Wash your hands and dry them thoroughly, and then practise deep breathing for a minute or two to regain a positive condition.

Be careful to avoid exhausting your powers. If you feel weary, or overstrained and excited—stop! Get out into the open air, or change the conditions by enjoying social conversation, genial companionship, music and song. Take a hot bath and a smart rub down, hold the handles of a good battery, or turn your attention to something else. Get a good sleep if you possibly can.

Remember receptivity may be carried too far, and the practice of intro-vision may render you too negative and too open to intrusive, dominating psychic influences—from people on this side or the other; and you must carefully guard your-

self against any 'suggestions' that would lower your tone, weaken your will, or cause you to lose self-control.

HOW TO BECOME A CLEAR-SEER.

The instructions that we have already given for the cultivation of psychometrical power, or susceptibility to the auric emanations of people, places, or things, will in the main apply to and cover the ground of the preparations necessary for the development of lucidity, or clairvoyant perception; for many psychometrists find that they literally see with the mind's eye, by means of the so-called 'astral' or etheric light, the scenes and persons that come before them, almost like cinematographic 'living pictures.' Indeed, they frequently hear as well as feel, trace, and see, and the suggestions we have made will apply to all phases of psychical perception—with this proviso, that you must try to *see* if you desire to be clairvoyant, and to *hear* if you wish to be clairaudient. In other words, you must pay *attention*—you must listen, look, and learn, and should either speak of or record your experiences.

It has been frequently observed that clairvoyants have a 'far away look' in their eyes, and that when in the lucid state they appear as if they were 'lost in thought.' It is this absence of self-consciousness which is so necessary, and yet so difficult to attain; for anything which tends to mar the complete subjugation of the outer self, and bring the psychic back to the normal state, interferes with the conditions required for clairvoyance.

Some sensitives breathe very rapidly and become very much agitated: they are restless, 'all nerves,' and get 'worked up' and excited before they have attained the condition where the inner self dominates the physical body and the ordinary consciousness. Others are quiet and placid, and pass easily into the receptive state, and require the utmost harmony and peace to secure the best results. You may feel as if you had a band drawn round your head, or across your forehead, just over the eyes; or it may feel as if it is on fire.

In any such case you should make a few passes over your brows, just, or barely, touching the skin with the tips of your fingers; beginning with both hands in the centre and passing outwards over the temples and ears This will prove soothing and helpful.

After you have developed your powers somewhat you will require to have an audience to whom you can describe your visions—or *for* whom you can exercise your gift. When the condition of lucidity has been attained you may be able to see pictured representations of the past life of persons with whom you have established *rapport*, or of their future experiences; or you may see into the human body and be able to describe the appearance of the organs of your visitors and give a diagnosis to those persons who are diseased.

For your experiments fix upon a time and keep it. Sit regularly, as by so doing you set up an automatic habit which is helpful. Choose a place where you will be quiet, and a time when you can be undisturbed. Sit comfortably in a dim light, but do not let yourself fall asleep. If you try 'crystal gazing' look steadily at the object, but do not strain your eyes, nor gaze as if you expected to pierce the 'veil' by sheer will power. Close and rest your eyes immediately you experience any sensation of weariness. Be calm, hopeful, persistent, and patient. Tone down all rapid or anxious vibrations by peaceful and aspirational thoughts. Intellectual passivity, but psychical activity, are needed. You must be outwardly at rest, but inwardly alert and receptive, and then you will function through the spirit body and grow free on the psychical side of your nature. You may use either a glass of water, a mirror, a polished surface, or a crystal, and gaze at it for the purpose of attaining the power to concentrate your attention and develop your inner vision. It will help you to focalise your psychical energies and to become oblivious to surroundings that would otherwise have a distracting effect. You may observe a cloudy or misty appearance in the glass or crystal, apparently, or stars, or centres of

brightness may appear in a rolling mist that very much resembles the vapour from an engine; after a time these centres may open out or condense, and faces or bits of scenery may be imperfectly perceived, and you may congratulate yourself that you are well on the way to become a seer. If, after a time, however, your efforts are not rewarded with success, you might close your eyes and mentally visualise some scene with which you are familiar; then open your eyes and try to see that scene in the glass or crystal.

Try to *imagine* a scene, bring it vividly before your mind's eye, work out the details as if you were painting them into a picture; *see* the scene mentally with closed eyes, and then endeavour to transfer it to your glass or crystal, and open your eyes slowly, expecting to see it there.

Experiments for the cultivation of this power of visualising can be made in many ways. William Blake, poet and painter, used constantly to see the conceptions as actual images or visions. 'You have only,' he said, 'to work up imagination to the state of vision, and the thing is done.' When you are travelling, for instance, look at one of your companions closely, studying his general appearance, the form and cast of his features, colour of his eyes and hair; then close your eyes and call up his picture so that you can see him mentally, or interiorly, and *re*-cognise his distinctive characteristics. If you are not successful, look again, then close your eyes once more, and keep on trying until the representation in your mind stands out clearly and distinctly, almost as if it is independent and external.

Before looking at your watch when you wish to know the time, close your eyes and try to visualise the timepiece, and to clairvoyantly discern the positions of the hands. Having done this, and formed your mental picture, look at your watch to ascertain whether you have been successful. This experiment can be varied by asking someone to move the hands of a clock, or watch, without your knowledge, and then you can state what you think is indicated.

You can experiment with a book or paper by placing your finger haphazard upon a word, and then try to read it as though your finger was not there.

Think of someone who is absent, and whom you will soon see; then try mentally, or clairvoyantly, to discover where he is and what he is doing. Do not expect a very definite vision at first, but say whether you feel or 'sense' that the one you think of is in the street, in a vehicle or a house; make a note of the time, and ask your friend as to his whereabouts at that hour when next you see him. This experiment may be tried in another way; and you may succeed in perceiving distant places or people if you sit down where you will not be disturbed, concentrate your interest and attention, and endeavour to project yourself out of the body. *Mentally* get up, go out of your house, follow the road to the home of a friend, open the door, walk in, look around, take notice of what you see or what you *think* you see; then return in the same manner, wake up from your abstracted state, notice the time, write down where you have been and what you observed, or, as it is sometimes put, '*seemed* to see,' and on the first opportunity make inquiries to ascertain if your recorded experiences harmonise with the facts. At first you should only try to go a little distance and to intimate friends, and when you have succeeded with them you may try to go further afield.

As every human being is encircled by a luminous auric emanation, you may try to observe this, and you will probably find that it varies in colour with different people, and with the same person at different times. It may appear grey, blue, red, white, or golden. 'The intensity of these colours varies in proportion to the intensity of the desires of the individual. In evilly disposed persons the dark emanations preponderate; in those who are better disposed, the light colours are predominant.'

You may sit in the dark or in the light, with your eyes shut or with them open, by yourself or in company with

others in a circle; you may seek to render your mind a blank and be passive and receptive, or you may think and visualise as clearly as you are able; you may breathe deeply, slowly or rapidly, or you may almost suspend respiration to induce a quiescent condition; you may invoke Divine aid, or evoke certain spirits; you may fast, or you may use stimulants or narcotics, as did the 'ancients' (although we strongly deprecate the latter course), for all these methods and others have been successfully employed by different people to induce the necessary conditions for the liberation and exercise of these 'gifts'; but the object underlying them all is the same, viz., to, in a sense, induce a somnambulic or trance state, or a species of self-hypnotism, so far as the outer phases of consciousness of sensations are concerned, and liberate the inner or spirit self, that it may function and express itself upon the soul side of your nature, and transfer the perceptions of the verities of the inner world to the outer consciousness, so that you may live in both worlds at one and the same time, instead of being shut in to the sense-world.

Remember that while the process of visualising is helpful and stimulative, tending to induce psychical activity and to set free the perceptive powers, it is not independent spirit sight—that is, you only perceive what you yourself originate and not what exists on the spirit plane. You should sometimes refrain altogether from visualising, and mentally request your spirit friends to try to make their presence known to you by vision, independent of your own efforts.

You may possibly find that although you are not naturally clairvoyant, and even fail to induce the 'superior condition' by these experiments, yet you may become sleepy and feel that you are unable to keep awake, and by yielding to the inclination to doze you may be in reality passing under the influence of some spirit who may develop your sensitiveness, so that you will become clairvoyant, clairaudient, or psychometrically impressionable. Your vision may open upon the spiritual plane, and spirit visitants may make themselves

visible to you, so that by describing their appearance to others, recognitions may be obtained.

Tests of spirit identity may be forthcoming as the result of your observation of their peculiarities of personal appearance, characteristic gestures, &c.; and too, you may receive 'impressions' from them, or they may speak to your inner ear, and enable you to give messages to their friends. No amount of 'visualising' will create these spirit appearances, and for this phase of clairvoyance you will need to sit quietly and endeavour to open your spirit eyes and await the coming of spirit people; or you may perceive scenes in the spirit world, and certain localities there will become familiar to you.

Pictures or symbols are sometimes thrown up by spirit operators before the psychical vision of sensitives, and even though you may be a natural clairvoyant you may find that your powers are increased and intensified by spirit co-operation.

It may be that you will find your clairvoyant faculties become active before you fall asleep at night, or while you are asleep. Many sensitives affirm that they leave their bodies and travel in spirit through space to distant places on earth or to scenes in the spirit world. Many so-called dreams are in reality clairvoyant visions, and are frequently of a prophetic nature; and symbols are often employed to convey to the outer consciousness the warning which friends in spirit life are anxious to impart to their loved ones on this side. If you should experience any such intimations of watchful care from the other side, receive them thankfully, but use your own judgment regarding them.

HOW TO BECOME A HEALER.

If you wish to ascertain whether you possess healing power you should endeavour to give relief to those of your friends and acquaintances who suffer from bruises or strains; or headache, neuralgia, toothache, or other nervous ailments. It is unnecessary for you to exercise your will in giving mag-

netic treatment: a kindly, benevolent, and sympathetic desire to help and heal, allied to your psychic force or healing 'virtue,' will prove efficacious if you possess the natural temperamental qualifications. By 'laying on' your hands for the purpose of healing you will soon find that your vital force, or 'magnetic' power, concentrates in and permeates them. The healer's hands are generally soft and cushiony; they readily fill with blood and become warm and velvety, and you will probably experience a peculiar sensation of fulness, as though they are 'charged' with power.

The right hand is said to be positive and the left negative, and by laying your hands upon the patient you form a circuit, with his body as the point of contact between them. Mr. James Coates says:* 'No mechanical drill will make a healer. As the hearty, spontaneous handshake of a trusty friend invigorates, causing a warm glow of pleasure and happiness to spread over the entire body; so will the hearty, vigorous conditions of mind in the healer give effect to his passes and manipulations, rather than by placing his hands "so, so," on "such and such places." Still, if there is any virtue in "*zones hypnotices*," then there are localised spots on the human body more sensitive to magnetic influence than others; and by the laying on of hands, or making passes over these regions, speedier and more lasting effects are obtained than by working away in the dark and healing by guesswork.'

In olden times all good housewives were expected to understand 'simples,' and to be able to deal successfully with all minor 'hurts' or accidents, and in these times the heads of households should at least understand how to employ 'magnetic' treatment, so that by the 'laying on of hands' they may relieve minor pains and ailments, even if they are unable to cope with, and cure, more serious illnesses. The mother who rubs the bruised knee of her child unconsciously

* 'Human Magnetism.'

gives it magnetic treatment, and when she 'kisses the place to make it well,' when the little one bumps its head or hurts its finger, she adopts the 'mind cure' without understanding that fact; but it would surely be better if she knew how to direct her power and employ the full force of her sympathy to relieve the little sufferer.

For most ordinary treatments you should sit in front of your patient, take his hands in yours and hold them for a few minutes. You may engage him in pleasant conversation or direct him to be calm and easy and expectant. You should then proceed, according to the nature of his ailment and your impressions regarding him, to either make slow, steady, soothing, and equalising passes in front of him, from the top of the head downwards to the solar plexus (or 'pit of the stomach')* and then outwards, returning the hands to the head with the palms downwards and repeating the pass, and alternating with passes from the top of the head down over the ears and shoulders, along the arms and off at the finger-tips—either without contact or barely touching him; or else you should go behind him and make similar passes from the top of his head down the spine. At the conclusion of each pass shake your hands as if you are throwing something off the ends of your fingers, and you should wash your hands both before and after each treatment.

For headache or neuralgia stand in front of the sufferer, and make a few passes with your right hand across his brows from left to right, barely touching the skin, holding his right hand with your left. Or, place both your hands lightly on the top of his head and slowly bring them forward till the tips of your fingers are just above the root of the nose; then separate your hands, passing them over the forehead just above the brows, across the temples, over and down behind the ears, and off at the shoulders. Or, stand behind the patient and lay your hands lightly on his forehead for two or three

* The 'Zoist' says that the solar plexus is a great nerve centre—so important that it has been called the 'abdominal brain.'

minutes, then draw them back across the temples, over the ears, and off down the spine. Or, stand at his right side, place your right hand on his forehead and your left at the base of the brain, just above the nape of the neck; hold his head between your hands thus for several minutes, then make slow and gentle passes down the spine, keeping your right hand still, following with downward passes with both hands. A few full-length equalising passes from head to toe should be used to conclude most treatments.

For lung troubles you should place your right hand upon the chest and the left upon the spine between the shoulders, and hold them thus for some few minutes; then make downward passes from the top of the head along the spine, keeping the right hand in position upon the chest, or slowly moving it downwards to cover the solar plexus.

For stomach troubles proceed in a similar way, but put the right hand over the region of the stomach and the left hand opposite to it over the spine. Treat the liver or the kidneys in a similar manner. You may in addition employ the warming and stimulating treatment of insufflations.

Take a clean, large-size pocket-handkerchief, fold it so that you have not less than four or more than six thicknesses, lay it over the part affected, draw in your breath through your nostrils, apply your lips to the handkerchief, and then slowly but penetratingly exhale the breath; repeat this process for some minutes, say from five to ten. Do not strain yourself, there is no need to *blow* hard. Never use the handkerchief for more than one treatment without its being washed. Bandages can be magnetised in this way.

You should not seek to dominate or control your patient, but you may strive to arouse his forces; stimulate and strengthen his nervous system, and thus assist Nature in her efforts to expel the poisonous elements that have accumulated in his system, impeding its ordinary functional activity, and setting up inflammation, congestion, fever, or other diseased conditions. You probably possess the power to modify, if

you cannot wholly regulate, the action of his vital energies; and he can help you by being calm and hopeful, and by breathing deeply; and you, too, should practise deep breathing, as full, rhythmic, conscious respiration tends to equalise the flow of magnetic power to the blood, arouses the nervous system, and harmonises the inner and outer forces of soul and body. It is a natural stimulant which produces a sense of exhilaration, and acts as a tonic to both body and mind.

You will find that the proper mental attitude in your patient is just as important as is your own. If you are to help him, he must also help himself. If he has confidence in you and expects good results; if he is mentally and psychically receptive, your work will be easier and the effects more enduring, and while you do your utmost to give him relief and restore him to health, you should urge upon him the necessity for the discontinuance of those habits or modes of living which have caused his sufferings. Unless he is willing to intelligently co-operate and second your efforts by affording good mental conditions, and *living the life*, why should you expend your vital energies to lift him to healthy conditions only to see him revert to the old practices and fall back to the diseased state from which you vainly rescued him?

In ordinary magnetic treatment it is unnecessary to attempt to throw your patient into a state of trance, or hypnotic sleep, or to give him 'suggestions' and make him subservient to your will or directions; but as sound sleep is restorative, nerve-building, and healthful, and you may sometimes have cases—of insomnia, for instance – in which it will be advisable to induce natural slumber, you will find that slow, soothing, full-length passes within a few inches of your patient, but without touching him, will generally prove effective. But before attempting to induce sleep you should always obtain your patient's consent. After explaining why it is desirable, and placing him in an easy restful position, you may gently suggest to him that he is going to sleep, and will

awake refreshed, but do not exercise any will-force to secure the result desired. Should your patient be one of the opposite sex, your own common-sense, and ordinary courtesy, will indicate the advisability of the presence of a sympathetic friend of the sufferer. To diagnose the conditions of your patient and ascertain the causes of his sufferings, you should sit before him holding his hands, and wait to see if by community of sensation, or by sympathetic transference, you can feel the pains that affect him, and trace them to their source, or clairvoyantly perceive the state of the organs of his body. As, however, you cannot expect to immediately succeed, and may make mistakes, you should experiment in this way mostly for your own development, until you can rely upon your perceptions, and in all cases you must exercise your own discretion as to how much or how little you tell your patient regarding his condition.

It will be unwise for you to attempt to heal chronic ailments or serious disease until your healing force is well developed and you have acquired the power of concentration. Be careful that you do not undertake too much. Many kind-hearted healers have injured themselves by attempting to cure others when they themselves were exhausted.

We strongly deprecate the practice of giving prescriptions, herbal or otherwise, unless the healer possesses knowledge of the properties of herbs and their suitability to the patient; or unless such prescriptions are submitted to a competent practitioner who does understand their nature and use. We have heard, and known, of patients being recommended to take the strangest medley of herbal 'remedies,' which, if the directions had been followed, would have been injurious, if not fatal, in their effect; but we have also known of instances in which herbal and other prescriptions, associated with magnetic treatment, have been remarkably beneficial.

The foregoing suggestions will, we trust, assist you in the commencement of your work as a healer, and if you are observant you will soon discover the best course to follow; or

you will probably be impelled by your own psychometrical intuitions, or by spirit guidance, in your methods of treatment.

If you are mediumistic you will probably find that your hands will move, seemingly of their own accord, if you let them go, and will either rest upon, or make passes over, the afflicted spot or organ of your patient's body; and you will realise that a spirit is acting upon and through you, and directing their movements. It will be well for you to remember that the spiritual magnetic healer should be passive, serene, confident, and aspirational, and cultivate the ability to psychometrically sense the need of his patient. He may even temporarily 'take on' the conditions of the sufferer himself —like as it is said of a healer of old that 'He bare our infirmities in His own body.' You should expect, aspire for, and will doubtless receive, the assistance of wise healing spirits, and the more you realise, trust, and openly acknowledge your indebtedness to ministering angels, the more powerful for good will you be.

MENTAL HEALING.

The 'New Thought' movement emphasises the fact that by the exercise of thought-power each one can form his own character and secure his own health and happiness. If a man should say, 'I wish I were healthy, strong, successful and happy,' you might respond, 'How *much* do you wish it?' If you sincerely, unreservedly wish it, you may—nay, you *will*—be all that you really desire to be. The power is in yourself; you alone can change your attitude and do what is necessary, and the first step is to believe in *yourself*. If you must have an 'authority,' and need outside help, go to some teacher—read some stimulating book—but sooner or later you *must* come to the point of being your own authority.

The objection is often made that, 'When a man is suffering he grows weak and dispirited; and, consequently, when he needs it most, he has the least power to control his will.

force and become mentally positive.' Here, then, is the opportunity for the Mental Healer who gives his patient helpful affirmative health suggestions and teaches him to help himself.* Undoubtedly right thinking will lead to right living, and will eventually render the work of the healer unnecessary, but not until worry, anger, and fear-thought are overcome, and the spirit of goodness and love reigns supreme —a consummation devoutly to be wished !

HOW TO BREATHE DEEPLY.

The *reason* for deep breathing should be borne in mind, and the following beneficial results be pleasantly anticipated, viz., the building up of life tissues throughout the body—especially the strengthening and restoration of any weak or deranged organs—the stimulation of the brain functions into normal and vigorous operation, the purification of the blood and toning up of the nerves, the increase of magnetic life-forces with augmented thought-power and will-ability, together with clearer conceptions and more cheerful views regarding life and its purposes, and the general opening up of the psychical avenues of perception.

Ordinarily we seldom do more than use half our lung capacity, and the cells are permitted to retain vitiated air, or to wither away from neglect We must *regulate* our breathing, and send the pure air into every cell, so that the blood will receive the virtue of the sunshine, the oxygen, and the ether, and go coursing throughout the system with power to build up the tissues and give strength to brain and nerve. For this purpose you must consciously operate and control the move-

* 'We will give a sample mental treatment: "You wish to be well, and because you wish to be well, I suggest to you that you are well. I put my will in harmony with yours. I put my thought in harmony with your intention. I say unto you, you can express health, you can express that full measure of health you desire to express, that which you desire to do being good, upright and honourable, that you can do. Suggestive treatment is to assist you to do your own work perfectly, not to control you but to liberate you, not to enslave your will but to emancipate it from thraldom."'—W. J. Colville.

ments of the abdomen. The air must be sent right down into the most remote cells, and to make room for it the expansion should be at the waist. Hold the muscles tense in this extended condition, and then slowly exhale, at the same time indrawing the abdomen, so as to assist in expelling the whole of the air. The shoulders should not be lifted in the slightest, but the walls of the chest should be elevated. It is not only by drawing in deep breaths that benefit is secured, but by the proper and systematic expulsion of the air, and in consequence of this exercise the lung cells are strengthened and nourished, and after a time expand even more fully than before.

Avoid strain. Do not be in a hurry. Stop if you feel the slightest symptom of pain or giddiness. Slow and sure should be your motto.

Mind and body must co-operate; every breath should be consciously and intentionally drawn.

The mouth must be closed, and the air indrawn slowly and steadily through the nostrils.

These exercises should be practised in the open air or by an open window; they need not be prolonged; a few minutes at certain times each day will suffice at the outset, and the length of each inhalation and exhalation should be timed.

Stand with heels together, arms at the sides, palms in or hands easily closed, shoulders squared or thrown slightly back, head erect, eyes level, body straight but inclined slightly forward.

Breathe steadily and deeply, counting slowly one to seven. Hold the breath for several seconds, say, five or seven, then steadily and slowly exhale, counting one to seven as before. This will probably be a little trying at first—especially so to keep it up regularly, say, for three or five minutes,—but persevere; it becomes easier with repetition. Still, if you feel that you *must* have a change, take one or two quick breaths, or sniff the air as you would do if you thought you smelt fire.

Here is another method that is recommended. Lie flat

upon your back and relax all the muscles so that the whole body is limp. The clothing should be loose and comfortable. Think about what you are doing, and desire to draw the life forces to yourself from the air you breathe. After silent meditation and aspiration for a few minutes, commence to draw long and deep inspirations, counting eight seconds while doing so; hold the breath steadily while you count eight, and then slowly exhale while you count eight. This process should not be continued for more than ten minutes consecutively, or more than three times a day, nor immediately after a meal. As the unwonted exercise and increased supply of oxygen are likely to have a stimulating, probably exhilarating, effect, you will require to be cautious, not to overdo it at first. The frequency of the 'set' practice and the length of time given to the inhalation, holding, and expelling of the breath, can be increased as time and practice enable you to become accustomed to, and benefited by, the effects; but always bear in mind that the object to be aimed at is more full, regular, and powerful breathing *all the time*.

Deep breathing can be practised when you awake in the morning, at intervals during the day, when you have two or three spare, quiet minutes; and when you lie down to sleep relax every muscle, compose your mind, dismiss your cares and anxious thoughts, suggest to yourself that you are to enjoy restful and refreshing slumber; take slow, regular, and full inhalations, and let yourself calmly and serenely fall asleep, making your claim upon the Fountain of all Life for renewal, in loving confidence that balmy sleep will indeed be a 'restorer.'

CHAPTER VII.

THE SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE.

God hath been gradually forming man
In His own image since the world began,
And is for ever working on his soul,
Like sculptor on his statue, till the whole
Expression of the upward life be wrought
Into some semblance of the Eternal thought.
Race after race hath caught the likeness of
The Maker, as the eyes grew large with love.
—GERALD MASSEY.

All growth requires at least semi-seclusion, partial darkness, silence; then the soul itself becomes passive as the surface of an unrippled lake, and draws from the great infinite reservoir of life refreshing dews, which refill it with those precious elements that the daily wear of this world so readily exhausts. . . Let me assure you that in the depth of your own inner life there is a fountain of inspiration and wisdom, which, if sought aright, will yield you more abundant satisfaction than any simple cup of living water which I, or any other individual, can place to your lips.—M. K.

WE have seen that mediumship is perfectly natural, and that it is dependent upon extreme psychical sensitiveness, which is itself an attribute and evidence of man's spiritual nature and capabilities, and that the manifestations of excarnate spirits through the agency of mediums demonstrate the continued conscious existence of mankind beyond the tomb. We have also seen that psychical susceptibility can be cultivated and consciously exercised by those sensitives who are willing to devote the necessary time and study to the task, so that, philosophically, phenomenally, and psychically, we have proofs of man's spiritual nature here and of his survival 'on the other side.'

Dr. J. M. Peebles has well said that: 'Spiritual medium-

ship is the crown of all man's finer forces. There is nothing supernatural in it. Mediums are natural sensitives; psychically considered they stand upon the mountain tops and catch the first sunbeams of truth. They are the hyphens, conscious and unconscious, connecting the seen with the unseen realms of immortalised intelligences.'

That the exercise of psychical or spiritual 'gifts' is important and desirable is apparent to the thoughtful student, even in the limited sphere of their mediumistic manifestation, but when we recognise that all culture results from, and is the expression of, man's spiritual potencies, and that the inward, spiritual or religious life is the highest form of his psychical activity, we shall realise how necessary it is that this subject should be studied, and these powers elicited and expressed in orderly fashion by wise and enlightened sensitives.

Intuition—the power of direct perception—is on the spiritual plane what instinct is on the physical, but it is frequently difficult to differentiate it from unrestrained desire—in which 'the wish becomes father to the thought.' So, too, Imagination—the wonderful faculty possessed by the inner self of picturing, originating, and forming on the subjective plane—unless it is trained and intelligently exercised, may involve its possessors in many difficulties; and it is necessary, therefore, to proceed with extreme caution to maintain one's balance. Heart and head, to use familiar terms, must co-operate and supplement each other, so that rationalism may be religious and religion rational, and in the cultured intuitional reason we shall have the combination of qualities fitting us to receive the highest inspirations—to become the embodied expression of the Divine Mind.

The development of mediumistic sensitiveness and the cultivation of the psychical powers of psychometric and clairvoyant perception should not be allowed to dominate one's thoughts and purposes, or occupy all one's time. It must be remembered that life has its daily duties, its ordinary relationships and 'practical' responsibilities; that true development is the

harmonious, *all-round* cultivation and exercise of one's powers —the bringing out and enjoying of all one's capability, physically, mentally, morally, and spiritually; and that *special* developments are dangerous because they generally mean imperfect development and weakness in other directions. The cultivation of psychic power is not everything; the development of sensitiveness should be desired rather as a means to an end than as 'the end all and be all' of life.

The power which the spirit possesses to break its bonds, when it can control conditions, is only beginning to be faintly realised, and its *creative* ability (shall we say?), when positive, affirmative thoughts are conceived and projected into the great thought-realm (where they can be perceived and realised by those who are in sympathy with the ideas or purposes that are expressed), is a theme for many a scientific discourse—and many a sermon!

When a drop of water, used upon a patient under hypnotic influence, can, by suggestion, be made to produce a blister, who shall deny the power of thought over the secretions of the body? The subject is tempting, but we must stay our hands, save in so far as it indicates the ability which we all possess to govern and regulate our lives—even to the maintenance of physical health, mental vigour, moral force, and spiritual strength—especially so as regards the control of the kind of thoughts and feelings that we entertain. It is true that we may not be able to prevent the intrusion of unwelcome, pessimistic, or distasteful thoughts and feelings; but we can refuse to give them lodging and entertainment, and substitute other and more worthy and helpful ones.

'The inner side of every cloud
Is bright and shining.
And so I turn my clouds about,
And always wear them inside out,
To see the lining!'

The fact that feelings and thoughts can be created by ourselves within ourselves; that in course of time we become

what we determine we *will* be; that the power for self-culture, self-expression, and self-realisation rests and abides *within* us, is the keynote of the spiritual, or psychical, gospel. We do not deny that environments hamper and limit; that education and misdirection bind and enslave; we admit that heredity counts for a great deal; but we *do* say that *the* prime fact, and factor, amid all circumstances, is the man himself. He is the *centre*-stance—the Deific focus of positive energies that he may employ consciously and with intent for his own betterment.

The building of character, consciously and purposefully, not so much in a line with temperamental tendencies and moods, or conventional rules and requirements, as in strenuously following out one's highest ideals of right, purity, honour, and truth; in overcoming bias and prejudice, and rendering loving service to others, is no easy task, and it is one that is too seldom fully undertaken; but it will be in this direction that the greatest progress will be made in the evolution of true and righteous manhood and womanhood.

The new attitude which is being assumed by man towards himself is perhaps the most important outcome of Spiritualism as it is the most significant and hopeful of the tendencies of the dawning twentieth century. The old cringing, pessimistic, self-depreciatory 'I cannot' conceptions are rapidly passing away, and the affirmative gospel that man is a spiritual being, progressive and responsible, is taking its place, and the knowledge of the educational value of the 'discipline of pain' which teaches us to cease to do evil and learn to do well, is sending us faring forth with confident spirit to learn to use our thought-power and express our true nature.

We now realise as never before the operation of the great Law of Consequences; that we reap what we sow both here and hereafter and that reform must begin in the individual. While improvement of environments and the breaking down of limitations will exert a beneficial influence and afford 'opportunity' to the one who is ready to advance, yet the

real and permanent upward trend will only be revealed when the soul-self is awakened and dominates as a moving, moulding force in the ordering of life—for

> 'Tis the set of a soul
> That decides its goal,
> And not the calm or the strife.'

'Be thyself' is the Divine command that is written in the very principles of our being. We have too long looked for the work of salvation and liberation to be accomplished *for* us, not *by* us. '*Believe* and be saved' instead of '*Behave* and be saved' has been dinned into us until we have failed to realise that we must trust, and exercise, the potency of our own spirit—the Divine Life (Word) dwelling *in us*—and act as if we really, honestly and fully believed that we are sons of the living God. We have sold our spiritual heritage for a 'mess of pottage' far too long and have supinely bent our backs to the enslavers. But the time is drawing near when we shall be free men and stand erect in the conscious exercise of Royal powers, as children of the King. There is no miracle-worker like this wonderful and rational faith in the Soul; no liberator like the love of all that is true, pure, good, and beautiful; no Redeemer so powerful as knowledge rightly applied; no Gospel that can equal the glad tidings of our innate Divinity, our immortal heritage, our inherent capacity to understand and attune ourselves to the principles of life. 'As many as do the will of God they are the sons of God.'

The fact that man is a centre of deific possibilities, which he may consciously cultivate and express, implies the innate divinity of every human being; that every man is related to, and dependent upon, the Supreme Life; that there is constant influx and efflux; that the radiations from the Infinite Mind circulate throughout the Universe, are immanent everywhere, and that we are continually bathing in the atmosphere of Divine Love, breathing it unconsciously; and the aura of the All-Good touches us at all points.

The spirit teachers of 'M.A. (Oxon)' wrote: 'This is that great truth of which we have before spoken, that ye are Gods, in that ye have a portion of that all-pervading, all-informing Spirit which is the manifestation of the Supreme, the indwelling of God.'

Our outer-life manifestation is but a fragmentary expression of what we are in reality; we can educe our powers, quicken, strengthen, and intensify our consciousness, enlarge our sphere of influence, and reveal our true nature by self-cultivation; but below (or within) all that is evolved lies the permanent reality—the spirit-self. It is difficult to realise the full significance of that fact; but realisation—*self*-realisation on those lines is the key of interpretation which unlocks all mysteries, even that of godliness—God made manifest in the flesh, not of one man only, but of all men. If we mistrust ourselves we show want of faith in the Spirit Divine; for no man can truly trust in God who has no faith in himself and fails to realise that the fountain-head of power, of growth, of manifestation, is within himself, and that all things that exist are expressions of the power we call 'God.' This intuitive consciousness of relation to, and dependence upon, the Universal Life and Love, although differing according to the degree of spiritual unfoldment of the believer, has ever struggled for expression; and back of and above all creeds and rituals it has been the affirmative impulse attesting the innate spirituality of man.

What spirit is *per se* we know not, but we do know that we are self-conscious beings, and that all our knowledge is simply a re-reading of the pre-existing principles of the universe. As thought precedes form, and the building, machine, instrument, law, creed, and hypothesis, all exist in the mind before they are expressed in one form or another, it is manifest that ideas and ideals are real and rule the world. We, at our best, are the interpreters and exponents of the Intelligence which is at the back of and within the universe; its law and its life—the inward Spirit, of whom all things are the out-

ward and visible signs—the thought-forms which serve to disclose as well as to hide Him from us.

We continually, even though unwittingly, receive the beneficent ministrations of Light, Life, and Love, and live, move, and have our being in the aura which emanates from the Universal Soul; but when we become conscious of this delightful inter-relationship; when we become spiritually illumined, attuned, and responsive, and can clairvoyantly, clairaudiently, or psychometrically perceive and realise our own Divine potentialities and responsibilities, our royal descent and godly heritage, our whole being thrills with a new sense of the sanctity of life. The sacred joy of being, the keen pleasure we experience in the use of power, and the happy serenity which possesses us as we rest secure in 'the Everlasting Arms' and know that all is well, can only be experienced—it cannot be described or imparted; it must be felt, known, enjoyed to be comprehended. Our soul-powers can best be realised when we can attain the attitude of unselfish love; of mental repose and serene quietude of spirit, wherein, while desiring illumination, we can confidently, without haste and without rest, lay open the placid surface of spiritual being to the movings of the Divine informing Life and Love.

Helen Keller, the blind, deaf mute, won her way to college, but realised the disadvantages of that institution after she got there. She said: 'I used to have time to think, to reflect—my mind and I. We would sit together of an evening and listen to the inner melodies of the spirit which one hears only in leisure moments, when the words of some loved poet touch a deep, sweet chord in the soul that has been silent until then. But in college there is no time to commune with one's thoughts. One goes to college to learn, not to think, it seems. When one enters the portals of learning one leaves the dearest pleasures—solitude, books, and imagination—outside with the whispering pines and the sun-lit, odorous woods.'

We must have time to listen, to feel, to be baptised and inspired, to see, and understand, and respond, and we need not wonder that many people are 'going into the silence' to gain insight, strength, and serenity. With unrest, anxiety, and sensationalism the mind becomes disturbed, and, like water stirred from its depths and broken into waves upon the surface, it cannot reflect the blue heavens; it can only give back broken gleams of truth.

'Let thy soul walk softly in thee, as a saint in heaven unshod,
For to be alone with silence, is to be alone with God.'

The phenomena connected with the subtile domain where mind and matter meet require the nicest discernment and the most unerring intuition for their correct interpretation. The seen and the unseen worlds are so intimately related that every earnest and sincere effort put forth on this side for self-culture, control, and expression, and for the good of others, relates us to like-minded and loving people on the other side who are, by our aspirations, enabled to respond with helpful and sustaining influences. The more fully this is realised by us the greater will be the assistance and inspiration that we shall receive. As Lizzie Doten says: 'There are invisible teachers around you, the hem of whose garment I am unworthy to touch. "The words that they speak unto you—they are Spirit and they are Life." In order to know more you must be more. Faith strikes its roots deep in the spirit, and often Intuition is a safer guide than Reason. When a man, by constant practice, has so quickened his spiritual perceptions that he can receive conscious impressions from his invisible attendants, he will never be without counsellors.

'Let Faith be given
To the still tones that oft our being waken—
They are of Heaven.'

'The spirit world is not so distant as it seems, and the veil of materiality which hides it from our view, by hopeful and

untiring aspiration can be rent in twain. We only need to listen earnestly and attentively, and we shall soon learn to keep step in the grand march of life to the music of the upper spheres.'

Communion with departed loved ones and the development of psychical susceptibility will fail to produce their legitimate effects, if, while they comfort, enlighten, and inspire us, they do not deepen our religious convictions, sweeten and ennoble our characters, broaden our sympathies, and kindle a deathless light in the inner sanctuary of our consciousness that will enable us to do better work and live more wisely and lovingly. If we do not cultivate spirituality, and serenity of soul, how can we expect exalted angels to minister unto us, or that we shall have visions of the glorious land beyond the mists of death?

Spiritualism helps us to understand the 'unity of the spirit' and the 'brotherhood of man' in the divine relationship wherein the greatest among us is the servant of all. The possession of great gifts is an added responsibility. We are only stewards of our powers on behalf of others, and our desire to gain knowledge and influence should be vitalised and dignified by the intention to use them to help, teach, and serve our fellows, and in such service we shall ourselves be blest.

'We are each and all another's,
We can never stand alone,
And for pain or wrong inflicted
We must every one atone.
Let us feel that we are brothers,
That our interests are one,
We shall help each other onward,
And the will of God be done.'

THE END.

WHAT TO READ.

Those who wish to pursue their studies should read the literature of the movement, subscribe for 'Light,' a weekly journal, price 2d., 10s. 10d. per annum post free, join the London Spiritualist Alliance, Limited, and avail themselves of its splendid library of upwards of 1,500 volumes; the finest and most complete collection of works upon psychical and spiritualistic subjects, we believe, now in existence.

Those who prefer to purchase books will find the following especially helpful in their study of the subjects to which this Guide is devoted:—

'Hints to Inquirers.' By J. J. Morse. Price 4d., post free, 4½d.

'Mediumship and its Development, and How to Mesmerise to Assist Development.' By W. H. Bach. 1s. paper, post free 1s. 1½d.

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